











THE ARDEN SHAKESPEARE  
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THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET



THE WORKS  
OF  
SHAKESPEARE

THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET

EDITED BY

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## INTRODUCTION

THIS edition of *Hamlet* aims in the first place at giving a trustworthy text.

Secondly, it attempts to exhibit the variations from that text which are found in the primary sources—the Quarto of 1604 and the Folio of 1623—in so far as those variations are of importance towards the ascertainment of the text. Every variation is not recorded, but I have chosen to err on the side of excess rather than on that of defect. Readings from the Quarto of 1603 are occasionally given, and also from the later Quartos and Folios, but to record such readings is not a part of the design of this edition. The letter Q means Quarto 1604<sup>1</sup>; F means Folio 1623.

The dates of the later Quartos are as follows :—Q 3, 1605 ; <sup>2</sup> Q 4, 1611 ; Q 5, undated ; Q 6, 1637. For my few references to these later Quartos I have trusted the *Cambridge Shakespeare* and Furness's edition of *Hamlet*.

Thirdly, it gives explanatory notes. Here it is inevitable that my task should in the main be that of selection and condensation. But, gleaning after the gleaners, I have perhaps brought together a slender sheaf. Thus, I am not aware that I have been antici-

<sup>1</sup> Also denoted by Q 2, in Q 2, 3, etc.

[<sup>2</sup> Not now regarded as a separate Quarto (Q 3), but as some copies of Q 2 dated 1605 instead of 1604. R. H. C.]

pated in my explanation of Hamlet's question about Alexander's body, in the Churchyard scene (v. i. 218); of his swearing by St. Patrick (I. v. 136); of the name Lamord (IV. vii. 93). I hope I may have done something towards the solution of the "dram of eale" crux (I. iv. 36-38), and of "stand a comma 'tween their amities" (v. ii. 42). I have noted a curious parallel between Jonson and Shakespeare (II. ii. 210-214). With the aid of the New English Dictionary I have perhaps removed any doubt as to the meaning of "mortal coil" (III. i. 67), and given its correct sense (though this is doubtful) to "anchor's cheer" (III. ii. 231). I have perhaps explained why Polonius classes "fencing" with drinking and drabbing (II. i. 25). I have made what I suppose to be new—perhaps erroneous—suggestions as to "Take this from this" (II. ii. 156) and "tender me a fool" (I. iii. 109). If ingenuities are anywhere pardonable, it is in conjecturing the meaning of Hamlet's riddling speeches; it was not his cue ever to talk sheer nonsense; accordingly I have ventured to throw out, doubtfully, suggestions—possibly darkening counsel with words—on "fishmonger" (II. ii. 174), "mad . . . handsaw" (II. ii. 401-403), "suit of sables" (III. ii. 139), "soul of Nero" (III. ii. 413), "The body is with the king" (IV. ii. 30), "drink up eisel? eat a crocodile" (v. i. 298). I, very doubtfully, suggest a new reading of "select and generous" (I. iii. 74), and a modification of Mr. Tovey's emendation of the "Yaughan" crux (v. i. 67). Occasionally, as in the "Nunnery" scene with Ophelia (III. i), I have tried to explain Hamlet's thoughts rather than verbal difficulties. When what is worthless has been sifted away,



a little that is a real addition to our knowledge of Shakespeare may remain.

For the earliest references to the legendary Hamlet the reader should consult Mr. Gollancz's interesting volume *Hamlet in Iceland* (1898). The first in date, he tells us, is found in the second section of Snorri Sturlason's *Prose Edda* (about 1230):—"The Nine Maids of the Island Mill" (daughters of Ægir, the Ocean-god) "in ages past ground Hamlet's meal." The words occur in a quotation of Snorri from Snæbjörn, who was probably an Arctic adventurer of the tenth century. The name Amhlaide is found yet earlier. In the *Annals of Ireland by the Four Masters*, under the year 917 (=919), in a fragment of song (having reference to the battle of Ath-Cliath between the Northerners and the Irish) attributed to Queen Gormflaith, appear the words: "Niall Glundubh [was slain] by Amhlaide." Mr. Gollancz identifies this Amhlaide with Sitric, a Northerner, who first came to Dublin in 888, and hazards the conjecture that "Gaile," a cognomen applied to Sitric, may mean *mad*, and that Amhlaide may be a synonym of "Gaile." He believes that in the Scandinavian kingdom of Ireland was developed, in the eleventh century, the Northern tale of Hamlet as we know it from Saxo.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Ambales Saga*, which Mr. Gollancz prints, is in its present form "a modern production belonging to the sixteenth, or perhaps early seventeenth century," preserving possibly some elements of the pre-Saxo Hamlet legend. The Icelandic folk-tale of Brjam (first written down from oral tradition in 1705) is "nothing but a levelling down of the story of Hamlet, cleverly blended with another folk-tale of the 'Clever Hans' type" (Gollancz, Introduction, lxiv. and lxviii.). [See also the same author's *Sources of Hamlet*, 1926, and articles on the etymology of Hamlet by Professor Kemp Malone in *The Review of English Studies*, July 1927 and 1928. R. H. C.]

Probably about the opening of the thirteenth century the Danish writer Saxo Grammaticus told in Latin the story of Amlethus in the third and fourth books of his *History of the Danes*. The reader will find an English version in Mr. Elton's translation of Saxo. The Northern Hamlet legends, oral or written, are mingled by Saxo with borrowings from the old Roman story of Lucius Junius Brutus. Horwendil and his brother Feng rule Jutland under King Rorik of Denmark. Horwendil slays Koll, king of Norway, and marries Gerutha, the daughter of King Rorik; their son is Amleth. Feng, jealous of his brother, slays Horwendil, and takes Gerutha to wife. Amleth feigns to be dull of wits and little better than a beast, while secretly planning vengeance. He baffles the courtiers by riddling words, which for them are nonsense, but are really significant. A girl, his foster-sister, is placed in his way, in the hope that his conduct may betray his true state of mind; his foster-brother warns him of the snare, and he baffles his enemies. A friend of Feng, "more confident than wise," proposes to act as eavesdropper during an interview between Amleth and his mother. Amleth, crowing like a cock, flapping his arms like wings, and leaping hither and thither, discovers the eavesdropper hidden under straw, stabs him and brutally disposes of the body. He explains to his mother that his madness is feigned and that he plans revenge, and he gains her over to his side. His uncle sends Amleth to Britain, with two companions, who bear a letter graven on wood, requesting the king to slay Amleth. The letter is altered by Amleth, and his companions are put to death. His adventures in Britain

do not affect Shakespeare's play. He returns, makes the courtiers drunk, nets them in hangings knitted by his mother, sets fire to the palace, and slays his uncle with the sword. He harangues the people, and is hailed as Feng's successor. After other adventures of crafty device and daring deed, Amleth dies in battle. Had he lived, favoured by nature and fortune, he would have surpassed Hercules.

Saxo's *History* was printed in 1514. In 1570 Belleforest—freely rendering Saxo's Latin—told the story of Amleth in French in the fifth volume of his *Histoires tragiques*. The English translation of Belleforest's story, *The Historie of Hamblet*, is dated 1608, and may have been called forth by the popularity of Shakespeare's play.<sup>1</sup> Here the eavesdropper hides behind the hangings of Geruthe's chamber, and Hamblet cries, "A rat! a rat!" circumstances probably borrowed from Shakespeare.

As early as 1589 an English drama on the subject of Hamlet was in existence. It is referred to in that year by Thomas Nash in a printed letter accompanying Greene's *Menaphon*. We know from this passage, and other allusions, that it was a drama written under the influence of Seneca, and that a ghost appeared in it crying "Revenge!" Henslowe's diary informs us that it was acted, not as a new play, at Newington Butts in June 1594. The suggestion that Thomas Kyd was the author—made long since—was supported with substantial evidence by Mr. Fleay in his *Chronicle of the English Drama* (1891), and, in my opinion, was decisively

<sup>1</sup> It may be found in Furness's *Hamlet*, vol. ii., or in Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, vol. i.

proved by Gregor Sarrazin in the section entitled "Der Ur-Hamlet" of his *Thomas Kyd und sein Kreis* (1892). It is not improbable that Nash, in the passage where he speaks of Hamlet, puns upon the name *Kyd*.<sup>1</sup> We may fairly assume that it was a companion piece to Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*—itself a play of revenge (a father's revenge for a murdered son, inverting the Hamlet theme); of violent passion bordering on distraction; including among the *dramatis personæ* a ghost, and presenting, like *Hamlet*, a play within the play. Kyd translated Garnier's *Cornelia* from the French, and could read the story of Hamlet in Belleforest. English actors had visited Elsinore, and had lately returned to London, bringing their tidings of Denmark.

Mr. Corbin, in a very ingenious study, *The Elizabethan Hamlet* (1895), has conjectured that the lost play by Kyd exhibited a Hamlet resembling the Amleth of Saxo in his being rather a man of resolute action than a man of contemplation, and that his assumption of madness was the occasion of vulgar comedy; the affliction of insanity was, as we know, often regarded by Elizabethan dramatists from the comic point of view. The conjecture is well worthy of consideration. In developing his theory Mr. Corbin makes use, however, of one piece of evidence, which must be held as of doubtful value. A rude German drama, *Der Bestrafte Brudermord*, found

[<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, after careful scrutiny of the various grounds for an allusion to Kyd here, McKerrow (*Works of T. Nashe*, iv. 449 *sqq.*) sums up as follows: "Nashe is, I think, speaking of not one writer, but of a group—probably, but not certainly, of dramatists. He did know of a Hamlet play, but the passage throws no light upon its authorship. There is no reason for supposing either Kyd or the *Spanish Tragedy* to be referred to." R. H. C.]



in a manuscript dated 1710, is taken by Mr. Corbin and others as based on Kyd's *Hamlet*. This is possible; but it seems to me far more probable that the German play is a debased adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in its earliest form. Perhaps, as Tanger has suggested (*Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, xxiii.), a few recollections of the later form of Shakespeare's play were woven in by actors who arrived in Germany at a later date.<sup>1</sup>

Under the date July 26, 1602, was entered in the Stationers' Registers for the printer James Roberts, "A booke called The Revenge of Hamlet Prince [of] Denmarke, as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes." There are no grounds for supposing that Shakespeare wrote the play earlier than 1602.<sup>2</sup> In the following year appeared in quarto, "The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke By William Shake-speare. As it hath beene diverse times acted by his Highnesse servants in the Cittie of London: as also in

<sup>1</sup> See Cohn's *Shakespeare in Germany* (1865); Latham's *Two Dissertations on the Hamlet of Saxo Grammaticus and of Shakespear* (1872); and Furness's *Hamlet*, vol. ii. A *Hamlet* was performed by English actors at Dresden in 1626. Tanger's article, referred to above, is of great value.

<sup>2</sup> The note by Gabriel Harvey in a copy of Speght's *Chaucer* (1598), mentioning *Hamlet*, was seen by Steevens, Bishop Percy, and Malone, but its date was a matter of conjecture. Harvey lived for many years after the publication of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. [This note, happily recovered (see *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia*, ed. G. C. Moore Smith, 1913, Appendix II. and Preface vii.-xii.) contains obstacles to dating it; but certain words, "The Earle of Essex much commendes Albion's England," induce the editor, as Essex did not perish till February 1601, to place it between sometime in 1598 and that event. Mr. W. J. Lawrence (*Times Literary Supplement*, April 8 and May 20, 1926) argues for 1600 within these limits, finding an allusion in "the humorous man shall end his part in peace" (*Hamlet*, II. ii. 339, 340) to what happened at the production of Jonson's *Every Man Out of his Humour* in 1599. The audience did not on this occasion permit the humorous man to end his part in peace, resenting some lines of "absurd and fulsome rant, bordering on profaneness," as Gifford calls them, with which Macilente's concluding speech began his praise of, and prayer for, the Queen. R. H. C.]

the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere. At London printed for N. L. and John Trundell. 1603." The Lord Chamberlain's servants of 1602—Shakespeare's company—had, since the accession of James I., become his Highness' servants. It is conjectured that the play was acted at the Universities "at some entertainment in honour of the king's accession," the subject being connected "with the native country of his queen."

In 1604 appeared a second Quarto: "The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke. By William Shakespeare. Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie. At London, Printed by I. R. for N. L., and are to be sold at his shoppe under Saint Dunstons Church in Fleetstreet. 1604." I. R. stands, we may be sure, for James Roberts.<sup>1</sup>

It is unquestionable that the copy for the Quarto of 1603 was surreptitiously obtained. Errors which seem to be rather errors of hearing than of sight, or of a compositor's memory in setting up a group of words, indicate that, according to a practice of the time, a shorthand writer was employed to take notes of the speeches during a theatrical performance. There are also errors which look like errors of a copyist; some of these may

[<sup>1</sup> Professor A. W. Pollard in *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos*, 1909, p. 74, points out that this is proved "by the occurrence at the beginning of the text" of Roberts's "headpiece of the Royal Arms," and identifies Valentine Sims as printer of the 1603 Quarto by similar evidence. The entry for Roberts in S. R. was, in his view (p. 73), "intended solely to place an obstacle in the way of the book being licensed to anyone else," but piracy dispensed with a licence. In his *Shakespeare's Fight with the Pirates*, 1920, he comments (p. 50): "In this case the players seem to have condoned the attack, and Ling was allowed to publish a revised edition, which was printed for him by Roberts, . . ." R. H. C.]

have occurred in writing out the shorthand notes for the printer. T. Bright's system of shorthand, moreover, gave scope for many errors in interpreting the characters of the stenographer.<sup>1</sup> But the conjecture of the editors of the *Cambridge Shakespeare* that the defects of the manuscript derived from shorthand "were supplemented by a reference to the authentic copy in the library of the theatre," seems to deserve consideration. The earlier portion of the Quarto is both fuller and less inaccurate as compared with the true text than the later; perhaps the shorthand writer scamped his work; perhaps the theatrical underling,<sup>2</sup> whom we may suppose as assisting him by reference to the copy in the theatre, was discovered, or had no opportunity of completing his dishonest labours. In some instances it looks as if only a hasty and partly incorrect note of the substance of a speech was made, and this was expanded into several feeble or incoherent lines.

The Quarto of 1603, containing 2143 lines, is shorter by some seventeen or eighteen hundred lines than the play as we construct it from the second Quarto and the Folio; yet it gives substantially the whole action of the complete play. The names of two characters differ from those familiar to us—Polonius is here Corambis, and Reynaldo is Montano. Osric is here "a Bragart Gentleman"; Francisco is known only as

<sup>1</sup> See on this subject a remarkable paper, "Shakespeare und die Stenographie," by Curt Dewischeit, in the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, xxxiv. (1898).

<sup>2</sup> It is now suggested, but perhaps first by Dr. Furnivall in his *Introductions* to Griggs's facsimile of Q 1, 1880, that this was a player whose memory partially recalled other parts besides his own. Dr. Furnivall noted that the parts of Horatio, Marcellus, and Voltemar are well done. Some passages from Q, which differ widely from the received text, or are absent from it, are given in Appendix II. R. H. C.]

first Centinel. The King and Queen of the "Mouse-trap" tragedy are a duke and duchess; the duke's name is Albertus, not Gonzago; the duke and duchess have been forty years married, not thirty. Yorick's skull has been twelve years in the ground, not three-and-twenty. Laertes has come from Paris to the late King's funeral, not to the coronation of King Claudius. Hamlet's indignant "'Tis not alone my inky cloak" is addressed to Claudius, not to the Queen. The soliloquy "To be or not to be" and the "nunnery" dialogue with Ophelia occur in the same scene with the reading of Hamlet's love-letter, and before the "fishmonger" dialogue with Polonius; lines spoken to Hamlet by the Ghost on the platform are here spoken by Hamlet to his mother in her closet; Hamlet's comparison of Rosencrantz to a sponge appears here in another connection. It is the King, not Laertes, who proposes to anoint the rapier-point with venom. Gertrude, in the Closet scene, expressly declares that she was ignorant of her husband's murder, and she promises to assist her son in his revenge. There is a scene in which Horatio and the Queen confer about Hamlet's return to Denmark from shipboard, the Queen appearing as a confederate on Hamlet's side.

Such differences as these can be accounted for only in one of two ways — either, as the Clarendon Press editors maintain, a considerable portion of the old play is included in the Quarto of 1603, or that Quarto imperfectly and often erroneously exhibits Shakespeare's work in a form which he subsequently revised and altered. When careful and judicious investigators fail to agree, the matter must be admitted to be doubtful. For my



own part, repeated perusals have satisfied me that Shakespeare's hand can be discerned throughout the whole of the truncated and travestied play of 1603. The Shakespearian irony of many passages is unlike anything we find in plays of 1588-1589. With the exception of the following lines :—

Look you now, here is your husband,  
 With a face like Vulcan,  
 A looke fit for a murder and a rape,  
 A dull dead hanging looke, and a hell-bred eie,  
 To affright children and amaze the world :

I see nothing that looks pre-Shakespearian, and I see much that is entirely unlike the work of Kyd. It is possible, indeed, that Kyd's work may have been revised before 1600, but we have no evidence to that effect. Here and there echoes of a phrase, or a line, or a rhyme in *Jeronimo*, or *The Spanish Tragedy*, or *Solyman and Perseda*, may be heard in the Quarto of 1603, as echoes of Marlowe and of Lyly may be heard elsewhere. But it has been aptly pointed out by Sarrazin that reminiscences of Shakespeare's own *Henry V.* are found in a passage which appears only in this first Quarto. Compare from the Quarto :—

Well sonne *Hamlet* we in care of you : but specially  
 In tender preservation of your health,

\* \* \* \* \*

The winde sits faire, you shall aboorde to-night,

with the following from *Henry V.*, II. ii. 12 and 58-59 :—

Now sits the wind fair, and we will aboard.

\* \* \* \* \*

Though Cambridge, Scroop and Grey, in their dear care  
 And tender preservation of our person.

The general style of the *Hamlet* of 1603 is much more like that of an ill-reported play of that date than like the style of a play of Kyd's and Marlowe's time ; but the actor's speech about Hecuba and Priam, though much reduced in length, stands out from the rest of the play in this form as it does in the second Quarto and the Folio, by virtue of its reproduction of a style which was out of date at the opening of the seventeenth century.

The Quarto of 1604 is carelessly printed and ill punctuated as compared with *Hamlet* of the Folio, yet it represents more faithfully and fully what Shakespeare wrote. The Folio, counting only passages of more than one line, omits 218 lines ; the Quarto, 85. The most considerable omissions in the Quarto are three—thirteen lines immediately before the entrance of Osric in v. ii. ; this seems to be due to accident ; secondly, the passage about the boy actors in II. ii. ; the omission was probably made, as Professor Hall Griffin suggests, because it would be unbecoming in the King's servants to show hostility to the children, who were servants of the Queen ;<sup>1</sup> thirdly, part of the dialogue between Hamlet and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in an earlier passage of the same scene ; the reason for the omission seems to me obvious—Denmark is spoken of as a prison, or as one of the worst dungeons in the prison of the world, and Denmark was the native country of the English Queen.

The Folio text was evidently cut for the purpose of stage representation, and generally it may be described as more theatrical, but less literary, than the text of 1604. The greater part of IV. iv., including Hamlet's

[<sup>1</sup> See note to Appendix I.]

very important soliloquy, is deleted ; so are his meditations before the entrance of the Ghost in I. iv. ; Horatio's description of the prodigies in Rome before the fall of Cæsar, I. i. ; Claudius's remarkable words to Laertes, in IV. vii., on the wearing effect of time on passion ; Hamlet's reflections on the monster Custom, III. iv. ; Hamlet's lines about the courtiers and his resolve to hoist the enginer with his own petar, III. iv. ; and much of his mockery of Osric, v. ii.<sup>1</sup> Oaths and sacred words are altered to avoid the legal offence of profanity. Some actors' additions are introduced, such as the unhappy " O, o, o, o " of the dying Hamlet, following his words " The rest is silence." And there is a desire evident in the editors of the Folio text to modernise certain words which were regarded as old-fashioned.<sup>2</sup>

The duration of the action in the play presents difficulties. It opens at midnight with the change of sentinels. Next day Horatio and Marcellus, with Bernardo, inform Hamlet of the appearance of the Ghost ; it cannot be the forenoon, for Hamlet salutes Bernardo with " Good even, sir." On the night of this day Hamlet watches and meets his father's ghost. The season of the year is perhaps March ; the nights are bitter cold. The second Act occupies part of one day ; Polonius despatches

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Furnivall's Introduction to the second Quarto, prefixed to Griggs's facsimile.

<sup>2</sup> The relation between Q 2 and F has been further elucidated by scientific study of the texts and their bibliographical aspects (notably by Professor J. Dover Wilson, in *Spellings and Misprints in Q 2 of Hamlet*, English Association, *Essays and Studies*, 1924, x. 36 ; etc.). It is probable that both ultimately derive from the same MS. source (Shakespeare's original or near it), but that F was printed, without reference to Q2, from a transcript which had been and cut adapted for stage purposes and used as a prompt copy. See also Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, 1930, I. 408 *sqq.* R.H.C.]

Reynaldo to Paris, Ophelia enters alarmed by Hamlet's visit, her father reads Hamlet's letter, the players arrive ; and, when Hamlet parts from them, his words are, " I'll leave you till to-night." But before this day arrives, two months have elapsed since Hamlet was enjoined to revenge the murder—it was two months since his father's death when the play opened, and now it is " twice two months." Next day Hamlet utters his soliloquy, " To be or not to be," encounters Ophelia as arranged by Polonius, gives his advice to the players, is present at the performance of the play ; and, night having come, he pleads with his mother, and again sees his father's spirit. Here the third Act closes, but the action proceeds without interruption ; the King inquires for the body of Polonius, and tells Hamlet that the bark is ready to bear him to England. We must suppose that it is morning when Hamlet meets the troops of Fortinbras. Two days previously the ambassadors from Norway had returned, with a request that Claudius would permit Fortinbras to march through Denmark against the Poles ; Fortinbras himself must have arrived almost as soon as the ambassadors, and obtained the Danish King's permission. In IV. v. Ophelia appears distracted, and Laertes has returned from Paris to be revenged for Polonius's death. An interval of time must have passed since Hamlet sailed for England—an interval sufficient to permit Laertes to receive tidings of the death of Polonius and to reach Elsinore. In the next scene letters arrive announcing that Hamlet is again in Denmark ; before he was two days at sea, he became the pirates' prisoner. On the day of the arrival of letters Ophelia is drowned,

Her flowers indicate that the time is early June. Ophelia's burial and Hamlet's death take place on the next day. Yet the time has been sufficient for Fortinbras to win his Polish victory and be again at Elsinore, and for ambassadors to return from England announcing the execution of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. We might obligingly imagine that the pirate ship conveying Hamlet to Denmark was delayed by baffling winds; but his letters are written after he has landed, and they describe his companions as holding their course for England. The truth is, as stated by Professor Hall Griffin (whose record of the notes of time has aided me here), "Shakespeare is at fault"; he "did not trouble himself to reconcile . . . inconsistencies which practical experience as an actor would tell him do not trouble the spectator."

The division of the last three Acts of the play is made without the authority of any early edition. Act V. certainly opens aright. But the division between II. and III. is a matter of doubt, and the received division between III. and IV. is unfortunate. Mr. E. Rose proposed that III. should open with Hamlet's advice to the players (III. ii. of the received arrangement), and that IV. should open with the march of Fortinbras (our present IV. iv.). As regards IV., this is the division of Mr. Hudson in his *Harvard Shakespeare*; and but for the inconvenience of disturbing an accepted arrangement, to which references are made in lexicons and concordances, I should in this edition follow Mr. Hudson.

The names of the *dramatis personæ* incongruously mingle forms derived from the Hamlet tradition of the North with classical, Italian, and German forms. "Ger-



trude" is a modification of Saxo's "Gerutha." "Horatio," in the old play *Jeronimo*, is the name of Andrea's faithful friend, who reappears in *The Spanish Tragedy*. Both "Ofelia," the name of a shepherd, and "Montano" (the name of Reynaldo in the Quarto of 1603) are found in the *Arcadia* of Sannazaro. The autograph signatures—dated 1577—of Jörgen Rossenkrantz and P. Guldenstern appear on the same page of an old German album in the Royal Public Library at Stuttgart, the original owner of which had resided for some time at Copenhagen; <sup>1</sup> it does not follow that these individuals were in any sense the originals of Shakespeare's courtiers; an ambassador named Rosencrantz was sent to England at the accession of James the First, and there were other Guildensterns. Shakespeare probably obtained the names from actors who had returned from the Continent. "Fortinbras," wrote Mr. Elliot Browne (*Athenæum*, July 26, 1876), "is evidently Fortebras, or Strongarm of the family of Ferumbras of the romances, or may have come directly from Niccolo Fortebraccio, the famous leader of the *condottieri*."

It is not proposed here to notice the stage-history of *Hamlet*, the interpretations by eminent actors, nor the vast critical library that has grown around the play. Critics, I think, have sometimes erred in not keeping vividly before their imagination the nature of Shakespeare's task. They often speak as if the poet started with some central idea of which Hamlet was to be the exponent. "Shakespeare," wrote Goethe, "sought to

<sup>1</sup> See for facsimile *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, xxv.; and, for letters on the subject, xxvi.

depict a great deed laid upon a soul unequal to the performance of it." "In Hamlet," wrote Coleridge, "Shakespeare seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses and our meditation on the working of our minds—an equilibrium between the real and the imaginary worlds." I prefer to think of Shakespeare as setting to work with the intention of rehandling the subject of an old play, so as to give it fresh interest on the stage ; as following the subject given to him, and as following the instinctive leadings of his genius. The traditional Hamlet was distinguished by intellectual subtlety, by riddling speech, by a power of ingeniously baffling his pursuers, and, at the same time, by a love of truth. But the subtlety of Saxo's Amleth—and we may be sure the same is true of Kyd's Hamlet—was what Burke happily describes, in a different connection, as a "clumsy subtlety." If he would be taken to be mad, he affects unclean and brutal habits, or crows like a cock, or rides a horse with his head towards the tail. Shakespeare was attracted by the intellectual subtlety of Hamlet, and was inevitably led by his genius to refine this subtlety, and to diversify its manifestations. He was caught in the web of his own imaginings, and became so absorbed in his work that he forgot to keep it within the limits suitable for theatrical representation ; the tragedy has, perhaps, never been presented in its entirety on the English stage in consequence of its inordinate length. The swift and subtle wit that had its play at the Mermaid Tavern was now incarnated in one of the creatures of Shakespeare's imagination.

Hamlet is not the exponent of a philosophy ; he has, it is true, a remarkable power of reflection and a tendency to generalise, but he is not a philosophical thinker who seeks to co-ordinate his ideas in a coherent system. Perhaps Ulysses, perhaps Prospero approaches nearer to the philosopher, but neither Ulysses nor Prospero is a wit ; and Hamlet is a wit inspired by melancholy. He is swift, ingenious, versatile, penetrative ; and he is also sad. And when Shakespeare proceeded to follow the story in the main as he had probably received it from Kyd, it turned out that such subtlety overreached itself—which Shakespeare recognised as wholly right, and true to the facts of life. Hamlet's madness is not deliberately assumed ; an antic disposition is, as it were, imposed upon him by the almost hysterical excitement which follows his interview with the Ghost, and he ingeniously justifies it to himself by discovering that it may hereafter serve a purpose. But in truth his subtlety does not produce direct and effective action. Hamlet is neither a boisterous Laertes, who with small resources almost effects a rebellion in revenge for a murdered father, nor a resolute Fortinbras, who, mindful of his dead father's honour, can march through danger to victory. Hamlet's intellectual subtlety sees every side of every question, thinks too precisely on the event, considers all things too curiously, studies anew every conviction, doubts of the past, interrogates the future ; it delights in ironically adopting the mental attitudes of other minds ; it refines contempt into an ingenious art ; it puts on and puts off a disguise ; it assumes and lays aside the antic disposition ; it can even use frankness

as a veil,—for sometimes display is a concealment, as happened with Edgar Poe's purloined letter. Hamlet the subtle is pre-eminently a critic—a critic of art, a critic of character, a critic of society, a critic of life, a critic of himself.

The intellectual dexterity and versatility of Hamlet are united with a moral nature essentially honest. He will not hire a couple of assassins to despatch his father's murderer. He will not himself take action until he has evidence of the King's guilt. Like the Amleth of Saxo, he is a lover of truth concealed in craft. His emotional nature, though deeply disturbed by his mother's lapse from loyalty, and liable to passionate fluctuations, is sound at heart. He reverences the memory of his great father, a man of action, whom Hamlet resembles as little as he resembles Hercules. He is bound to Horatio by ties of the deepest esteem and affection. He is kind to the poor actors. He expends his utmost energy in an effort to uplift and redeem his mother's faltering spirit. He is over-generous in his estimate of Laertes. He has loved Ophelia as a vision of beauty and innocence, and is proportionately embittered when he supposes that he has deceived himself and been deceived. But all his inclinations are toward those who are unlike himself. He is complex and self-tormenting; Ophelia seems all simplicity and innocence; he is oppressed by melancholy thought; she is "something afar from the sphere of his sorrow." Horatio is a man whose blood and judgment, unlike Hamlet's own, are well commingled; one who can see the evil of the world, yet not grow world-weary; more of the antique Roman Stoic than a Dane. For

Fortinbras Hamlet has the admiration which the man of ideas feels for the man of resolute action. In Claudius he might have perceived some of his own intellectual subtlety and reflective habit, but conjoined with grosser senses and an evil moral nature ; and him Hamlet loathes with an impatient aversion.

Together with such an intellectual and such a moral nature, Hamlet has in him something dangerous—a will capable of being roused to sudden and desperate activity. It is a will which is determined to action by the flash and flame of an excitable temperament, or by those sudden impulses or inspirations, leaping forth from a sub-conscious self, which come almost like the revelation and the decree of Providence. It is thus that he suddenly conceives the possibility of unmasking the King's guilt, on the accidental arrival of the players, and proceeds without delay to put the matter to the test, suddenly overwhelms Ophelia with his reproaches of womanhood, suddenly stabs the eavesdropper behind the arras, suddenly, as if under some irresistible inspiration, sends his companions on shipboard to their death, suddenly boards the pirate, suddenly grapples with Laertes in the grave, suddenly does execution on the guilty King, plucks the poison from Horatio's hand, and gives his dying voice for a successor to the throne.

Hamlet's love for Ophelia is the wonder and delight in a celestial vision ; she is hardly a creature of earth, and he has poured into her ear almost all the holy vows of heaven. The ruin of an ideal leaves him cruelly unjust to the creature of flesh and blood. It is the strangest love-story on record. Never throughout the



play is there one simple and sincere word uttered by lover to lover. The only true meeting of Hamlet and Ophelia is the speechless interview in which he reads her soul, despairs, and takes a silent and final farewell. Even in the letter, written prior to the terrible announcements of the Ghost, there is a conventional address and a baffling conclusion. After the silent parting, no true word, except when passion carries him away to undeserved reproach, is uttered by Hamlet to Ophelia. His love has for the first time its outbreak at her grave, when the pity of it for a moment restores his lost ideal. Never to Horatio, never to himself in soliloquy, does he utter the name of Ophelia.

Whether Shakespeare's choice and treatment of the Hamlet story was in any way connected with the history of Leicester, Essex, and the mother of Essex, or with the history of Mary Queen of Scots and Darnley, cannot be considered here. I do not think that a good case has been made out for either hypothesis.

The references to other plays of Shakespeare than Hamlet are to act, scene, and line as found in the *Globe Shakespeare*.

I have to thank two learned students of Elizabethan literature, Mr. W. J. Craig,<sup>1</sup> editor of *The Oxford Shakespeare*, and Mr. H. C. Hart, for aid kindly given to me in the preparation of this volume.

[<sup>1</sup> Much additional comment and illustration of the text, mainly from this source, will be found in Appendix III. R. H. C.]



THE TRAGEDY

OF

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark.*

HAMLET, *Son to the late, and Nephew to the present King.*

FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway.*

HORATIO, *Friend to Hamlet.*

POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*

LAERTES, *his Son.*

VOLTIMAND,	}	<i>Courtiers.</i>
CORNELIUS,		
ROSENCRANTZ,		
GUILDENSTERN,		
OSRIC,		

*A Gentleman,*

*A Priest.*

MARCELLUS,	}	<i>Officers.</i>
BERNARDO,		

FRANCISCO, *a Soldier.*

REYNALDO, *Servant to Polonius.*

*A Captain.*

*English Ambassadors.*

*Players.*

*Two Clowns, Grave-diggers.*

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark, and Mother to Hamlet.*

OPHELIA, *Daughter to Polonius.*

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, and Attendants.*

*Ghost of Hamlet's Father.*

*SCENE : Elsinore.*

# THE TRAGEDY

OF

## HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

### ACT I

SCENE I.—*Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *at his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO.

*Ber.* Who's there?

*Fran.* Nay, answer me; stand, and unfold yourself.

*Ber.* Long live the king!

*Fran.* Bernardo?

*Ber.* He.

5

*Fran.* You come most carefully upon your hour.

*Ber.* 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

*Act I. Scene 1.] Acts and scenes are not marked in Q; in F only as far as II. ii. 1-5] Many editors follow Capell in printing as verse, the first line ending with unfold. 7. now struck] Steevens conj. new-struck.*

2. *me]* *Me* emphatic, Francisco being the sentinel on guard. Horatio and Marcellus answer the challenge otherwise, but Francisco is

3. *king]* Perhaps the watchword, not (line 15) at his post.



*Fran.* For this relief much thanks; 'tis bitter cold,  
And I am sick at heart.

*Ber.* Have you had quiet guard?

*Fran.* Not a mouse stirring. 10

*Ber.* Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

*Fran.* I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Hor.* Friends to this ground.

*Mar.* And liegemen to the Dane. 15

*Fran.* Give you good night.

*Mar.* O, farewell, honest soldier:  
Who hath relieved you?

*Fran.* Bernardo has my place.  
Give you good night. [Exit.

*Mar.* Holla! Bernardo!

*Ber.* Say,—  
What, is Horatio there?

*Hor.* A piece of him.

*Ber.* Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus. 20

*Mar.* What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

14. *ho! Who is*] Q, *who's* F. 16. *soldier*] F, *souldiers* Q. 17. *has*] F, *hath* Q. 21. *Mar.*] Q 1, F; *Hora.* Q.

13. *rivals*] *partners*, which is the reading of Q 1. Compare "rivalry" in *Ant. and Cleop.* III. v. 8, meaning "partnership," and *The Tragedy of Hoffman* (1631):

"ile seat thee by my throne of  
state

And make thee rivall in those gov-  
ernments."

16. *Give*] Ellipsis for "God give."

Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, I. ii. 59.

19. *A piece of him*] Warburton supposed that Horatio gives his hand; it is night, adds Ingleby, and Horatio is hardly visible to Bernardo. Shakespeare's intention seems to be to show that Horatio, the sceptical, can answer jestingly.

21. *Mar.*] The agreement of Q 1

*Ber.* I have seen nothing.

*Mar.* Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,  
And will not let belief take hold of him  
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us: 25  
Therefore I have entreated him along  
With us to watch the minutes of this night,  
That if again this apparition come,  
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

*Hor.* Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

*Ber.* Sit down awhile; 30  
And let us once again assail your ears,  
That are so fortified against our story,  
What we two nights have seen.

*Hor.* Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

*Ber.* Last night of all, 35  
When yond same star that's westward from the  
pole  
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven  
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,  
The bell then beating one,—

*Enter GHOST.*

*Mar.* Peace! break thee off; look, where it comes  
again! 40

26, 27. *along With us to*] comma after *along* Q, after *us* F. 33. *two nights have*] F, *have two nights* Q. 39. *beating*] *towling* Q 1. Enter *Ghost*] Q; Enter the *Ghost* after *off*, line 40, F.

with Ff in assigning this speech to Marcellus is strong against the Quartos, which assign it to Horatio. "Thing" need not imply doubt or disrespect. Aufidius, *Coriolanus*, iv. v. 122, addresses Coriolanus as "Thou noble thing!" "This thing" may be uttered with awe by Marcellus, or with an air of incredulity by Horatio. 29 *approve*] corroborate, justify, as in *Ant. and Cleop.* i. i. 60: "he approves the common liar."

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

*Mar.* Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

*Ber.* Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like; it harrows me with fear and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Question it, Horatio. 45

*Hor.* What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,  
Together with that fair and warlike form  
In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee,  
speak!

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See, it stalks away. 50

*Hor.* Stay! speak, speak: I charge thee, speak!

[*Exit Ghost.*]

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio? you tremble and look pale;  
Is not this something more than fantasy?  
What think you on't? 55

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this believe  
Without the sensible and true avouch  
Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the king?

41. *figure*,] F, no comma Q.  
20. *figure*] F, *Speake* to Q.

44. *harrows*] *horrors* Q 1. 45. *Ques-*

42. *scholar*] Latin was the language  
of exorcisms. Reed cites Beaumont  
and Fletcher, *Night Walker*, II. 1:

"Let's call the butler up, for he  
speaks Latin,

And that would daunt the devil."

44. *harrows*] Compare I. v. 16;  
and Milton, *Comus*, 565, "Amazed I  
stood, harrow'd with grief and fear."

45. Compare Boswell's *Life of  
Johnson* (ed. Birkbeck Hill, iii. 307):  
"Johnson once observed to me,  
"Tom Tyers described me the best:  
"Sir (said he) you are like a ghost:  
you never speak till you are spoken  
to,""

49. *sometimes*] sometime, formerly,  
as in *Henry VIII.* II. iv. 181.

*Hor.* As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on 60  
 When he the ambitious Norway combated;  
 So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,  
 He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.  
 'Tis strange.

*Mar.* Thus twice before, and jump at this dead  
 hour, 65

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

*Hor.* In what particular thought to work I know  
 not;

But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,  
 This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

*Mar.* Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that  
 knows, 70

Why this same strict and most observant watch  
 So nightly toils the subject of the land,  
 And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,  
 And foreign mart for implements of war;

61. *he*] omitted in F. 63. *sledded*] F, *sleaded* Q; *Polacks*] Mal., *pollax* Q 1, Qq 2, 3, 4; *Pollax* Ff 1, 2, Qq 5, 6; *Polax* F 3; *Pole-axe* F 4; *Polack* Pope and other editors (meaning the King of Poland). 65. *jump*] Q 1, Q; *just* F. 66. *hath he gone by*] *he passed through* Q 1. 68. *my*] F, *mine* Q. 73. *why*] F, *with* Q.

60. Furness asks, "Was this the very armour that he wore thirty years before, on the day Hamlet was born (see v. i. 155-176)? How old was Horatio?" But the armour would be remembered and be pointed out, when worn later.

62. *parle*] parley. *King John*, II. 205: "this gentle parle."

63. *sledded Polacks*] Poles in sleds or sledges. See *Polack* in II. ii. 75, and IV. iv. 23. The Earl of Rochester, 1761, explained *sleaded* as loaded with lead, and *Polacks* as pole-axe. Boswell suggested that a

person who carried the pole-axe was meant. "Sled" for sledge is found in Cotgrave's *French Dictionary*. Schmidt, reading "pollax (or pole-axe)," explains "sledded" as having a sled or sledge, *i.e.* a heavy hammer, to it.

65. *jump*] just, exactly. See v. ii. 386.

70. *Good now*] Please you, as in *Winter's Tale*, v. i. 19; Q 1 places a comma after "good," connecting "now" with "sit down."

72. *subject*] subjects, as in I. ii. 33.

Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore  
task 75

Does not divide the Sunday from the week ;  
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste  
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the  
day ;  
Who is 't that can inform me ?

*Hor.*

That can I ;

At least the whisper goes so. Our last king, 80  
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,  
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,  
Dared to the combat ; in which our valiant  
Hamlet—

For so this side of our known world esteem'd  
him— 85

Did slay this Fortinbras ; who, by a seal'd compact  
Well ratified by law and heraldry,  
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands  
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror ;  
Against the which, a moiety competent 90  
Was gaged by our king ; which had return'd  
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,

88. *those*] F, *these* Q. 89. *of*] Q, on F. 91. *return'd*] F, *returne* Q.

75. *impress*] impressment, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, II. i. 107.

77. *toward*] imminent, as in v. ii. 376.

83. *emulate*] emulous ; not elsewhere in Shakespeare.

86. *compact*] Always accented by Shakespeare on the last syllable, with one exception : *1 Henry VI.* v. iv. 163 (Clar. Press).

87. *heraldry*] Part of a herald's duty was to regulate the forms connected with a challenge and combat of state importance.

89. *seized of*] possessed of—the legal term still in use.

90. *moiety*] a portion, not necessarily a half. *1 Henry IV.* III. i. 96 : "my moiety . . . equals not one of yours."



Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant  
 And carriage of the article design'd,  
 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortin-  
 bras,

95

Of unimproved mettle hot and full,  
 Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there  
 Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,  
 For food and diet, to some enterprise  
 That hath a stomach in 't; which is no other— 100  
 As it doth well appear unto our state—  
 But to recover of us, by strong hand  
 And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands  
 So by his father lost. And this, I take it,  
 Is the main motive of our preparations, 105  
 The source of this our watch and the chief head  
 Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

93. *covenant*] *Cou'nant* F, *comart* Qq 2-5, *co-mart* Q 6 and many editors, Q of 1676 reads *compact*. 94. *article design'd*] Ff 2, 3, 4; *article desseigne* Qq 2, 3; *articles designe* Q 4; *Articles designe* Q 5; *Article designe* F 1. 96. *unimproved*] *inapproved* Q 1; Singer, ed. 2; Keightley. 98. *list*] *sight* Q 1; *lawless*] Q, *landlesse* F and many editors. 101. *As*] Q, *And* F. 103. *compulsative*] F, *compulsatorv* Q and many editors.

93. *covenant*] The "co-mart" of the Qq, if not a misprint, is of Shakespeare's coinage, meaning joint bargain.

94. *carriage*] process, or import.

96. *unimproved*] Clar. Press explains as "untutored, not chastened by experience." "Improve" is found in Chapman and Whitgift, meaning reprove (see Nares' *Glossary*), and "unimproved" may possibly mean unrebuked or unimpeached.

98. *Shark'd up*] Perhaps gathered as a sharker or swindler; or snatched indiscriminately as a shark swallows food.

98. *lawless*] The F "landless"

gives also an appropriate sense; but here Q 1 agrees with Q 2 in giving "lawless."

98. *resolute*] braves.

99. *food and diet*,] Paid only by what they eat. Qq 1, 2 have no comma after "diet"; may the meaning be that the resolute are to be the food and diet of a devouring enterprise, which has a stomach in it ("food for powder"), with a play on "stomach" in its second sense of stubborn resolution?

107. *romage*] rummage, originally a nautical term for the stowage of a cargo (Skeat).

*Ber.* I think it be no other but e'en so:

Well may it sort that this portentous figure  
Comes armed through our watch, so like the king 110  
That was and is the question of these wars.

*Hor.* A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,  
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,  
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted  
dead 115

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:  
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,  
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,  
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,  
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse: 120  
And even the like precurse of fierce events,  
As harbingers preceding still the fates

108-125. *Ber.* *I think . . . countrymen*] Q, omitted in F. 121. *fierce*  
Q 4 (*fearce*), *fearce* Q, *fear'd* Collier's conjecture.

109. *sort*] suit, as in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 55, "not sorting with a nuptial ceremony." Schmidt supposes it may mean "fall out," "have an issue," as in other passages of Shakespeare.

112. *mote*] The *moth* of Q is only an obsolete spelling of *mote*.

113. *state*] Wilson (Christopher North) pleads for "State" meaning Reigning City.

115-120.] Plutarch describes the prodigies preceding and following Cæsar's death—fires in the elements, spirits running up and down in the night, a pale sun, which gave little light or heat. Compare *Julius Cæsar*, I.iii. Such prodigies are very impressively described in Marlowe's *Lucan's First Booke translated*, published in 1600.

117, 118.] Perhaps a line following

116 has been lost; it may have mentioned prodigies in the heavens, or may have told of warriors fighting upon the clouds; in *Julius Cæsar*, II. ii. we read of such warriors who were "fiery," and from their encounters there "drizzled blood." Of many attempted emendations none is satisfactory. Malone conjectured "Astres with . . . Disastrous dimm'd the sun"; *astre* or *aster* is found in Florio's *Ital. Dict.* under "Stella" and in his translation of Montaigne. *New Eng. Dict.* explains "disasters" here as unfavourable aspects. The "moist star" is the moon—governess of floods; so in *Winter's Tale*, I. ii. 1: "Nine changes of the watery star."

122. *still*] constantly, as in *Tempest*, I. ii. 229: "the still vex'd Bermoothes."

And prologue to the omen coming on,  
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated  
 Unto our climatures and countrymen. 125

*Re-enter GHOST.*

But, soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!  
 I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!  
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
 Speak to me:  
 If there be any good thing to be done, 130  
 That may to thee do ease and grace to me,  
 Speak to me:  
 If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
 Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,  
 O, speak! 135  
 Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life  
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,  
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,  
 [The cock crows.  
 Speak of it: stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus.

138. *you*] *F*, *your* *Q*. The cock crows] *Q*, omitted in *F*.

123. *omen*] the ominous event. Farmer cites from Heywood's *Life of Merlin*: "Merlin . . . His country's omen did long since foretell."

125. *climatures*] regions; in which sense "climate" is commonly found. Dyce reads *climature*. Clar. Press suggests the inhabitants of our regions.

127. *I'll cross it, though it blast me*] Blakeway cites from Lodge's *Illustrations of British History*, iii. 48, a story of Ferdinando, Earl of Derby (who died 1594): on Friday a tall man appeared, who twice

crossed him swiftly; and when the bewitched Earl came to the place where he saw this man, he first fell sick. Opposite this line *Q* has the stage direction: "It spreads his armes."

134. *happily*] haply. See II. ii. 408, and *Measure for Measure*, IV. ii. 98 (Clar. Press). Hudson explains it "fortunately." Furness writes: "The structure of this solemn appeal is almost identical with that of a very different strain in *As You Like It*, II. iv. 33-42."

*Mar.* Shall I strike at it with my partisan? 140

*Hor.* Do, if it will not stand.

*Ber.* 'Tis here!

*Hor.* 'Tis here!

*Mar.* 'Tis gone! [Exit Ghost.

We do it wrong, being so majestic,  
To offer it the show of violence;  
For it is, as the air, invulnerable, 145  
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

*Ber.* It was about to speak when the cock crew.

*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty thing  
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,  
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn, 150  
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat  
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,  
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,  
The extravagant and erring spirit hies  
To his confine: and of the truth herein 155  
This present object made probation.

*Mar.* It faded on the crowing of the cock.  
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long; 160

140. *at*] F, omitted in Q. 150. *morn*] Q, *morning* Q 1, *day* F. 158.  
*say*] Q, *sayes* F. 160. *The*] Q 1, F; *This* Q.

140. *partisan*] a kind of halbert or pike.

150. *trumpet*] Malone quotes from England's *Parnassus*, 1600 (in a passage assigned to Drayton): "the cocke, the morning's trumpeter." "Trumpet" for "trumpeter" occurs in several passages of Shakespeare. *Henry V.* iv. ii. 61: "I will the banner from a trumpet take."

151. *lofty*] like "shrill," qualifies "sounding"; unless the uplifted throat of the crowing cock is meant.

154. *extravagant*] wandering out of bounds, vagrant. *Othello*, I. i. 137: "an extravagant and wheeling stranger." "Erring," straying.

156. *probation*] proof, as in *Measure for Measure*, v. 157.

And then, they say, no spirit can walk  
abroad;

The nights are wholesome; then no planets  
strike,

No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to  
charm,

So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

*Hor.* So have I heard and do in part believe it. 165

But look, the Morn, in russet mantle clad,  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern  
hill;

Break we our watch up; and by my advice,

Let us impart what we have seen to-night

Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life, 170

This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

Do you consent we shall acquaint him  
with it,

As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

*Mar.* Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning  
know

Where we shall find him most conveniently. 175

[*Exeunt.*]

161. *can walk*] F, *dare sturre* Q, *dare walke* Q 1. 163. *takes*] Q,  
*talkes* F. 164. *the*] F, *that* Q 1, Q. 167. *eastern*] F, *eastward* Q.  
175. *conveniently*] Q 1, F; *convenient* Q.

161. *walk*] The Q "stir" has not the special ghostly significance of "walk," which is frequent in Shakespeare, e.g. *Winter's Tale*, v. i. 63: "Were I the ghost that walk'd."

162. *strike*] blast, especially of planetary influence. *Coriolanus*, II. ii. 117: "struck Corioli like a planet." Furness quotes Florio's *Dict.*: "As-

*siderare*: to blast or strike with a planet, to be taken."

163. *takes*] affects with malignant influence. *Merry Wives*, IV. iv. 32 (of Herne the Hunter):

"And there he blasts the tree and takes the cattle."

So "taking airs" in *Lear*, II. iv. 166.

SCENE II.—*A Room of State in the Castle.*

*Flourish.* Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, *Lords, and Attendants.*

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
 The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
 To bear our hearts in grief and our whole king-  
 dom  
 To be contracted in one brow of woe,  
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature 5  
 That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
 Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
 Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,  
 The imperial jointress of this warlike state,  
 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,— 10  
 With one auspicious and one dropping eye,  
 With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,  
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—  
 Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd  
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone 15  
 With this affair along: for all, our thanks.

*Flourish*] Q, omitted F; the stage direction here is Malone's. Q after "Gertrad the Queene" has "Counsaille: as Polonius"; F names Ophelia as present. 8. *sometime*] Q, *sometimes* F. 9. *of*] F, *to* Q. 11. *one . . . one*] F, *an . . . a* Q.

9. *jointress*] Schmidt explains as dowager. Clar. Press: joint possessor. Hudson: heiress—"the Poet herein follows the history, which represents the former King to have come to his throne by marriage." 11.] Steevens notes the same thought in *Winter's Tale*, v. ii. 80. Grant White reads "drooping."

10. *defeated*] disfigured, marred, as

in *Othello*, I. iii. 346; or destroyed, undone, as in *Othello*, iv. ii. 160: "his unkindness may defeat my life."

11.] Steevens notes the same thought in *Winter's Tale*, v. ii. 80. Grant White reads "drooping."



Now follows that you know: young Fortinbras,  
 Holding a weak supposal of our worth,  
 Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20  
 Colleague'd with the dream of his advantage,  
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,  
 Importing the surrender of those lands  
 Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,  
 To our most valiant brother. So much for him. 25  
 Now for ourself and for this time of meeting:  
 Thus much the business is; we have here writ  
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—  
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears  
 Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress 30  
 His further gait herein; in that the levies,  
 The lists and full proportions, are all made  
 Out of his subject: and we here dispatch  
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,  
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway, 35  
 Giving to you no further personal power  
 To business with the king more than the scope

17. *know: young*] Walker; no comma after *know* Q, F; comma after *follows* F. 21. *the*] F, *this* Q. 24. *bonds*] F, *bands* Q and many editors. 25.] Enter Voltimand and Cornelius F. 26. *meeting:*] F 4, *meeting*, Q, *meeting* F. 35. *For bearers*] Q 1, Q; *For bearing* F.

17. *that you know:*] that which you know. The pointing is that suggested by S. Walker; commonly with commas after "follows" and "know."

21. *Colleague'd*] Theobald suggested "Collogued," flattered, cajoled. The "supposal," line 18, is colleague'd, united, with the "dream."

21. *his advantage*] his superiority to us.

22. *pester*] annoy, and especially by crowding, as in *Coriolanus*, IV. vi. 7: "Dissentious numbers pestering streets."

23. *Importing*] having for import; not, as Abbott explains, importuning. See *Othello*, II. ii. 3.

32. *proportions*] number of troops, as in *Henry V.* I. ii. 304: "let our proportions for these wars Be soon collected,"

Of these delated articles allow.

Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

*Cor., Vol.* In that and all things will we show our  
duty. 40

*King.* We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?

You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?

You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,

And lose your voice: what would'st thou beg,

Laertes, 45

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?

The head is not more native to the heart,

The hand more instrumental to the mouth,

Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.

What would'st thou have, Laertes?

*Laer.* Dread my lord, 50

Your leave and favour to return to France,

From whence though willingly I came to Den-  
mark,

To show my duty in your coronation,

Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,

My thoughts and wishes bend again toward

France 55

38. *delated*] Q, *dilated* F, *related* Q 1. 40. *Cor., Vol.*] Q, Volt. F. 41.  
Exeunt . . .] F 4, Exit . . . F, om. Q. 49. *is . . . to*] Q, F; *to . . .*  
*is* Warburton and other editors. 50. *Dread my*] F, *My dread* Q. 55.  
*toward*] Q, *towards* F.

38. *delated*] Perhaps a different spelling of the F "*dilated*," meaning expressed at large. But it may mean conveyed, carried, as in Bacon, *Natural History*: "the time wherein sound is delated . . . the delation of light is an instant."

47. *native*] cognate, connected by nature or birth, as in *All's Well*, I. i. 238: "To join like likes, and kiss like native things."

53. *coronation*] In Q 1 Laertes asks permission to leave "Now that the funerall rites are all performed,"

And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

*King.* Have you your father's leave? What says  
Polonius?

*Pol.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave  
By laboursome petition, and at last  
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent: 60  
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,  
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

*Ham.* [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind. 65

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

57. *Have . . . Polonius?*] Q, two lines F. 58. *He hath*] F, *Hath* Q.  
58-60. *wrung . . . consent*] Q, omitted in F. 64.] Exit Q 1. 64.  
*son,—*] *sonne.* Q, *sonne?* F, *son—* Rowe. 65. [*Aside*] added by Theobald.  
67. *so*] F, *so much* Q; *i' the sun*] Capell, *i' th' Sun* F, *in the sonne* Q.

56. *pardon*] permission to depart, as in III. ii. 332.

64. *cousin*] kinsman (exclusive of parent, child, brother, and sister); used elsewhere in Shakespeare for uncle, niece, grandchild.

65.] It can hardly be doubted that this—Hamlet's first word—is spoken aside. Does it refer to the King or to himself? If to himself, it may mean a little more than a kinsman (for I am, incestuously, a stepson), and less than kind, for I hate the King. So Malone. Knight says "little of the same *nature*" with Claudius. More probably it refers to the King, meaning: My step-father (more than cousin), but in less than a natural relation. Compare II. ii. 619: "lecherous, kindless (*i.e.* unnatural) villain." To "go" or "grow out of kind" is found in Baret's *Alvearie* and Cotgrave's *French Dict.*, meaning to degen-

erate or dishonour kindred. The play upon kin or kindred and kind or kindly is found in *Gorboduc*, in Lyly's *Mother Bombe*, and in Rowley's *Search for Money*. "Kind" for "nature" occurs several times in Shakespeare.

67. *i' the sun.*] Hamlet's delight in ambiguous and double meanings makes it probable that a play is intended on "sun" and "son." He is too much in the sunshine of the court, and too much in the relation of son—son to a dead father, son to an incestuous mother, son to an uncle-father. It was suggested by Johnson that there is an allusion to the proverbial expression (see *Lear*, II. ii. 168): "Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun," which means to be out of house and home; Hamlet is deprived of the throne. Schmidt takes it to mean merely, "I am more idle and careless than I ought to be."

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
 Do not for ever with thy vailed lids 70  
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust:  
 Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,  
 Passing through nature to eternity.

*Ham.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.* If it be,  
 Why seems it so particular with thee? 75

*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not "seems."  
 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
 Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,  
 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80  
 Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,  
 Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,  
 That can denote me truly; these indeed "seem,"  
 For they are actions that a man might play;  
 But I have that within which passeth show; 85  
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,  
 Hamlet,

68. *nighted*] Q, *nightly* F. 70. *vailed*] Q; *veyled* Ff 1, 2; *veiled* Ff 3, 4. 72. *common*;] Theobald, *common*, F, *common* Q. *lives*] Q, F; *live* Ff 2, 3, 4 and many editors. 77. *good mother*] F; *could mother* Qq 2, 3; *could smother* Qq 4-6. 82. *modes*] Q 1695, Capell; *moodes* Q; *Moods* F and many editors. *shows*] F; *chapes* Qq 2, 3; *shapes* Qq 4-6. 83. *denote*] F, Q 6; *denote* Q. 85. *passeth*] F, *passes* Q. 87.] Q, two lines F.

68. *nighted*] black. So in *Lear*, iv. v. 13: "his nighted life" (of the blind Gloucester). 82. *modes*] "Moods" may be right.

69. *Denmark*] the King; so "Norway" in line 28.

70. *vailed*] cast down. *Merchant of Venice*, i. i. 28: "Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs."

82. *shows*] The "show" of line 85, as Furness observes, is an intentional and emphatic repetition of the "shows" of this line.

To give these mourning duties to your father :  
 But, you must know, your father lost a father,  
 That father lost, lost his; and the survivor  
 bound 90

In filial obligation for some term  
 To do obsequious sorrow; but to persevere  
 In obstinate condolement is a course  
 Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;  
 It shows a will most incorrect to heaven, 95

A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,  
 An understanding simple and unschool'd :  
 For what we know must be and is as common  
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,  
 Why should we in our peevish opposition 100

Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,  
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
 To reason most absurd, whose common theme  
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,  
 From the first corse till he that died to-day, 105

"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth  
 This unprevailing woe, and think of us  
 As of a father; for let the world take note,  
 You are the most immediate to our throne;  
 And with no less nobility of love 110

90. *lost, lost*] *dead, lost* Q 1. 96. *a mind*] F, or *minde* Q. 107. *unprevailing*] *unavailing*, Hammer.

92. *obsequious*] Suitable to obsequies, as in *Titus Andronicus*, v. iii. 152: "obsequious tears." See also *Sonnets*, xxxi. 5.

92. *persevere*] Always accented by Shakespeare on the second syllable (Clar. Press).

107. *unprevailing*] *unavailing*. So

"prevails" in *Romeo and Juliet*, III. iii. 60. Dryden, *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*: "He may often prevail himself of the same advantages."

109. *immediate*] The throne of Denmark was elective; see v. ii. 65; but Hamlet was the probable successor to Claudius.

Than that which dearest father bears his son  
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
 It is most retrograde to our desire ;  
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain 115  
 Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:

I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.

*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you, madam. 120

*King.* Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply :

Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come ;  
 This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet  
 Sits smiling to my heart ; in grace whereof,  
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day, 125  
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,

112. *toward*] Q, *towards* F. 113. *in Wittenberg*] *to Wittenberg*, Qq 4, 5.  
 119. *pray thee*] Q, *prythee* F. 120.] Q, two lines F. 127. *heavens*]  
 F, *heaven* Q.

112. *impart*] The verb has no object ; perhaps it is a confused construction ; possibly it is a case of the absorption of "it" by the "t" of "impart." To obtain an object Badham suggests the reading "nobility no less" in line 110. Johnson explains "impart" as impart myself.

113. *Wittenberg*] The university was founded in 1502 ; Luther had made it famous. In *The Tragedy of Hoffman* (1602), the foolish Ierom says, "I am no foole, I have bin at Wittenberg, where wit growes." Shakespeare may have heard of it in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, and in Nash's *Life of Iacke Wilton*, 1594. It must be remembered that for Ham-

let Wittenberg was a foreign university, to which he might go at any age, after his earlier education had been completed.

114. *retrograde*] Prof. Hales notes in Chapman's *May-Day* (vol. ii. p. 373, ed. 1873) : "Be not retrograde to our desires." Originally an astrological term. See *All's Well*, I. i. 212.

127. *rouse*] bumper, as in I. iv. 8, and *Othello*, II. iii. 66 ; Swedish *ras*, drunkenness. Dekker, in *The Gul's Horn-Booke*, Proæmium, enumerating national drinking customs, mentions "the Danish Rowsa."

127. *bruit*] noise abroad, as in *Macbeth*, v. vii. 22.



Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

*Ham.* O! that this too too solid flesh would melt,

Thaw and resolve itself into a dew; 130

Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable

Seem to me all the uses of this world!

Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden 135

That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature

Possess it merely. That it should come to this!

But two months dead! nay, not so much, not two:

So excellent a king; that was, to this,

Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother 140

That he might not betem the winds of heaven

Flourish] Q, omitted F. 129. *solid*] F; *sallied* Q 1, Q; *sullied* Anon. conject. 132. *O God! O God!*] F, *ð God, God* Q. 134. *Seem*] Q, *Seemes* F. 135. *O fie!*] *ah fie* Q; *Oh fie, fie* F; *Oh fie* Ff 3, 4. 137. *come to this!*] F, *come thus* Q.

129. *too too*] Intensive reduplication; hyphenated by some editors. Compare *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. iv. 205.

129. *solid*] *Solid* and *melt* are found in conjunction, as here, in *2 Henry IV.* III. i. 48. The *sallied* of Q and Q 1 is defended by Dr. Furnivall, who cites Cotgrave's *French Dict. saillie*, a sallie, eruption, violent issue; also *assaille*, assaulted, assailed. If we were to retain *sallied*, I should explain it as sullied, comparing II. i. 39, where F reads *sullyes* and Q *sallies*; and, seeing that Q 1 has here "this too much griev'd and sallied flesh," we have some reason to think that *sallied* may be right. See Appendix III. p. 237.

130. *resolve*] Caldecott cites Baret's *Alwearie*: "To thaw or resolve that

which is frozen, regelo." Compare *Timon*, IV. iii. 442.

132. *canon 'gainst self-slaughter*] So also *Cymbeline*, III. iv. 77-80. "Unless it be the sixth commandment, the 'canon' must be one of natural religion" (Wordsworth, *Shakespeare's Knowledge and Use of the Bible*, p. 149).

137. *merely*] completely. Compare *Tempest*, I. i. 59: "We are merely cheated of our lives."

140. *Hyperion*] Spenser, Gray, Keats, like Shakespeare, throw the accent on the second syllable.

141. *beteem*] permit; "beteene" in Ff 1, 2. So Golding, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* (published 1587):

"Yet could he not beteeme  
The shape of any other bird then  
eagle for to seeme."

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!  
 Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,  
 As if increase of appetite had grown  
 By what it fed on; and yet, within a month— 145  
 Let me not think on't.—Frailty, thy name is woman!  
 A little month! or ere those shoes were old  
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,  
 Like Niobe, all tears; why she, even she—  
 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason, 150  
 Would have mourn'd longer,—married with my uncle,  
 My father's brother, but no more like my father  
 Than I to Hercules. Within a month?  
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes, 155  
 She married. O, most wicked speed, to post  
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!  
 It is not nor it cannot come to good;  
 But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

143. *would*] F, *should* Q. 145. *month—*] *month*, Q, *month?* F.  
 147. *shoes*] Q, F; *shows* Ingleby conj. 149. *even she*] F, omitted in Q.  
 150. *O God!*] Q, *O Heaven* F. 151. *my*] Q, *mine* F. 153. *month?*] F,  
*month*, Q. 155. *the*] *their* Q 1; *in*] Q, *of* F.

147. *or ere*] "Or," an old form of "ere"; so in line 183 of this scene, "Or ever." The reduplication is found in several other passages.

150. *discourse of reason*] discursive power of reason. Found several times in Florio's *Montaigne*, 1603. Johnson's *Dictionary* defines *discourse*: "the act of the understanding by which it passes from premises to consequences." See IV. iv. 36, and *Troilus and Cressida*, II. ii. 116.

153. *Hercules*] Perhaps a relic of the history of Amlethus in Saxo Grammaticus, whose Hamlet is in some respects the opposite of Shakespeare's

Hamlet. The closing words are: "Hic Amlethi exitus fuit, qui si parem naturæ atq. fortunæ indulgentiam expertus fuisset, æquasset fulgore superos, Herculeam virtutibus opera transcendisset."

155. *flushing*] Hudson and Rolfe explain this as redness. Clar. Press: "The verb 'flush' is still used transitively, meaning, to fill with water."

157. *dexterity*] adroitness. Clar. Press compares 1 *Henry IV.* II. iv. 286.

159. *break*] "A subjunctive, not an imperative, and 'heart' is a subject, not a vocative" (Corson).

*Enter* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, *and* BERNARDO.

*Hor.* Hail to your lordship!

*Ham.* I am glad to see you well: 160

Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

*Ham.* Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you:

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?

Marcellus? 165

*Mar.* My good lord,—

*Ham.* I am very glad to see you.—[*To Bernardo.*]

Good even, sir.—

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.

*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say so, 170

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself; I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart. 175

*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

165. *Marcellus?*] Capell, *Marcellus*. Q, F. 166. *lord,—*] Rowe; *lord*. Q, F; *lord?* Cambridge. 167. *sir*] *sirs* Q 1. 170. *hear*] Q, *have* F. 171. *mine*] F, *my* Q. 172. *make*] *take* Ff 2-4. 175. *to drink deep*] Q 1, F; *for to drinke* Q. 177. *pray thee*] F, *pre thee* Q. 178. *see*] Q 1, F; omitted Q.

160, 161.] Sir H. Irving, as Hamlet, delivers "I . . . well" as a conventional greeting to unrecognised intruders; Hamlet then looks up and perceives his friend.

163. *change that name*] exchange

the name "friend." Johnson explains: "I'll be your servant, you shall be my friend."

164. *make you*] do you, as in II. ii. 280.

*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked-meats 180

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

My father,—methinks I see my father.

*Hor.* O where, my lord?

*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio. 185

*Hor.* I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

*Ham.* Saw? who? 190

*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.

*Ham.* The king my father!

*Hor.* Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

*Ham.* For God's love, let me hear. 195

183. *Or ever I had*] Q, *Ere I had ever* F, *Ere ever I had* Q 1. 184. *My father,—*] Rowe, *My father!* Cambridge, *O my father, my father*, Q 1. 185. *O where*] F, *Where* Q. 187. *in all,*] *in all* Q, *in all*: F. 190. *Saw? who?*] F; *Saw, who* Q 1, Q. 193. *attent*] Q, F; *attentive* Q 1, Qq 4-6, Ff 3, 4. 195. *God's*] *Gods* Q, *Heavens* F.

180. *baked-meats*] pastry. Collins: "It was anciently the general custom to give a cold entertainment to mourners at a funeral. In distant counties this practice is continued among the yeomanry."

182. *dearest foe*] Clar. Press: "Dear is used of whatever touches us nearly either in love or hate, joy or sorrow." In *1 Henry IV.* III. ii. 123, we find "near'st and dearest enemy."

187. *a man,*] Edwin Booth, in delivering this speech, paused after "man," giving it as if something higher than "king."

192. *Season your admiration*] Temper your astonishment. Compare, for "season," II. i. 28, and for "admiration," III. ii. 342. So in Massinger's *The Renegado*, III. iii. "Season your admiration."

*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,  
 Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,  
 In the dead vast and middle of the night,  
 Been thus encounter'd : a figure like your father,  
 Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe, 200  
 Appears before them, and with solemn march  
 Goes slow and stately by them ; thrice he walk'd  
 By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,  
 Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distill'd  
 Almost to jelly with the act of fear, 205  
 Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me  
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;  
 And I with them the third night kept the watch ;  
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
 Form of the thing, each word made true and  
 good, 210  
 The apparition comes. I knew your father ;  
 These hands are not more like.

*Ham.* But where was this ?

*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

198. *vast*] Q 1, Qq 5, 6 ; *wast* Qq 2-4, F ; *waste* Ft 2-4 and many editors ;  
*waist* Malone, Steevens, Variorum. 200. *Armed at point*] Q, *Armed to*  
*poynt* Q 1, *Arm'd at all points* F. 202. *stately by them ; thrice*] Q,  
*stately : By them thrice* F. 204. *his*] F, *this* Qq 4-6. *distill'd*] Q, Q 1 ;  
*bestill'd* F 1 ; *bestill'd* F 2 ; *be still'd* Ff 3, 4 ; *bechill'd* Collier (MS.). 205.  
*the act of*] *th' effect of* Warburton. 213. *watch'd*] F, *watch* Q.

198. *vast*] vacancy, void, empti-  
 ness, as in *Tempest*, I. ii. 327, "vast  
 of night," "Waste" of Ff has the  
 same sense. Malone, supporting  
 "waist," quotes from Marston's *Mal-*  
*content* : "the immodest waist or  
 night."

200. *at point exactly*] Clar. Press  
 explains "at all points," and quotes  
*Richard II.* I. iii. 2 :

"*Mar.* Is Harry Hereford arm'd ?  
*Aum.* Yea, at all points."

204. *distill'd*] melted. Dyce quotes  
 from Sylvester's *Du Bartas* : "Melt  
 thee, distill thee, turn to wax or snow."  
 Jelly is probably named because of  
 its quivering, like the quivering of  
 fear.

205. *act*] action, operation, as in  
*Othello*, III. iii. 328.

*Ham.* Did you not speak to it?

*Hor.* My lord, I did;

But answer made it none; yet once methought 215

It lifted up its head and did address

Itself to motion, like as it would speak;

But even then the morning cock crew loud,

And at the sound it shrunk in haste away

And vanish'd from our sight.

*Ham.* 'Tis very strange. 220

*Hor.* As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;

And we did think it writ down in our duty

To let you know of it.

*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.

Hold you the watch to-night?

*Mar., Ber.* We do, my lord. 225

*Ham.* Arm'd, say you?

*Mar., Ber.* Arm'd, my lord.

*Ham.* From top to toe?

*Mar., Ber.* My lord, from head to foot.

*Ham.* Then saw you not his face?

*Hor.* O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

*Ham.* What, look'd he frowningly? 230

216. *it*] *its* Qq 5, 6, Ff 3, 4; *his* Q 1. 221. *honour'd*] *honourable* F1  
2-4. 224. *Indeed, indeed*] Q 1, F; *Indeede* Q. 228. *face?*] F, *face*. Q.  
230. *What, look'd he*] *How look't he*, Q 1.

214. *Did you*] Actors commonly emphasise "you"; Marcellus and Bernardo had been silent. Steevens argues for emphasis on "speak."

216. *it head*] "The possessive *it* occurs fourteen times in the Folio (not counting a doubtful case in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, v. ii. 21), *it's* nine times, and *its* only once" (Rolfe). The usual form of the possessive of *it* in Elizabethan writers is *his*.

226. *Arm'd*] Refers, of course, to the Ghost.

228. *face?*] The Q *face*. may be right, uttered with a tone of disappointed expectation.

229. *beaver*] "In the 16th century the beaver became confounded with the visor, and could be pushed up entirely over the top of the helmet, and drawn down at pleasure" (Planché).



*Hor.* A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

*Ham.* Pale, or red?

*Hor.* Nay, very pale.

*Ham.* And fix'd his eyes upon you?

*Hor.* Most constantly.

*Ham.* I would I had been there.

*Hor.* It would have much amazed you. 235

*Ham.* Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

*Hor.* While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

*Mar., Ber.* Longer, longer.

*Hor.* Not when I saw 't.

*Ham.* His beard was grizzled? no?

*Hor.* It was, as I have seen it in his life, 240  
A sable silver'd.

*Ham.* I will watch to-night;  
Perchance 'twill walk again.

*Hor.* I warrant it will.

*Ham.* If it assume my noble father's person,  
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape  
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all, 245  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable in your silence still;  
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night

232. *Pale, or*] Q, F; *Pale or* Qq 4-6. 236. *Very like, very like*] Q 1, F; *Very like* Q. 239. *grizzled? no?*] *grissl'd, no.* Q, *grisly? no.* F, *grisly?* Ff 2-4, *grizzled,—no?* Dyce. 241. *I will*] Q, *lle* F. 242. *walk*] Q, *wake* F; *warrant*] Q 1, Q; *warrant you* F. 247. *tenable*] Q 1, Q; *treble* F.

236. *like*] likely.  
244. *gape*] Staunton suggests that perhaps "gape" signifies *yell, howl, roar*, rather than *yawn* or *open*, citing *Henry VIII.* v. iv. 3.

247. *tenable*] The "treble" of F is

defended by Caldecott, meaning a threefold obligation of silence. G. Macdonald says, "The actor, in uttering it, must point to each of the three" witnesses. Clar. Press, "*treble*, a mere misprint."

Give it an understanding, but no tongue:  
 I will requite your loves. So fare you well: 250  
 Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,  
 I'll visit you.

*All.* Our duty to your honour.

*Ham.* Your loves, as mine to you: farewell,

[*Exeunt Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.*

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;  
 I doubt some foul play: would the night were  
 come! 255  
 Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,  
 Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.  
 [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in Polonius's House.*

*Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

*Laer.* My necessities are embark'd; farewell:  
 And, sister, as the winds give benefit  
 And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,  
 But let me hear from you.

*Oph.* Do you doubt that?

*Laer.* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour, 5

250. *you*] Q, *ye* F. 252. *duty*] *duties* Q 1. 253. *loves*] Q, *love* F.  
 254. *arms* /] F 4, *armes*? Ff 1-3, (*in armes*) in parenthesis Q. 256. *foul*] F.  
*fonde* Q. 257. *them, to*] Pope included *Tho'* . . . *them* in parenthesis;  
 no comma after *them* in Q, F.

*Scene III.*

3. *convoy is assistant*] F (semicolon after *assistant*), *convay, in assistant* Q.  
 5. *favour*] Q, *favours* F and many editors.

255. *doubt*] suspect, fear.

*Scene III.*

3. *convoy*] means of conveyance.

Compare *All's Well*, iv. iv. 10 (Clar. Press). Perhaps it means an escort of ships of war.

Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood,  
 A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
 Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,  
 The perfume and suppliance of a minute;  
 No more.

*Oph.* No more but so?

*Laer.* Think it no more: 10

For nature crescent does not grow alone  
 In thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,  
 The inward service of the mind and soul  
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you  
 now;

And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch 15

The virtue of his will; but you must fear,  
 His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;

For he himself is subject to his birth;

He may not, as unvalued persons do,

Carve for himself, for on his choice depends 20

8. *Forward*] Q, Ff 3, 4; *Froward* F; *sweet, not*] *tho' sweet, not* Rowe, *sweet, but not* Capell. 9. *perfume and*] Q, omitted F. 10. *so?*] Rowe, *so*, Q, F. 12. *bulk*] F, *bulkes* Q; *this*] Q, *his* F. 16. *will*] Q, *feare* F. 18.] Omitted in Q. 20. *Carve*] *Crave* Qq 4-6.

6. *fashion, and a toy in blood*] a mode of youth, that he should serve a mistress, and a play of amorous temperament.

7. *primy*] of the spring-time.

8. No metrical emendation is necessary; the speaker dwells on "sweet," as if to draw out its meaning, and pauses slightly.

9. *suppliance*] Mason explains "an amusement to fill up a vacant moment."

10. *so?*] Corson prefers the "so." of Q, F; Ophelia does not question but submits.

13. *service*] Suggested, in the sense of religious service, by "temple."

15. *cautel*] craft, deceit. Used by Shakespeare only here and in *A Lover's Complaint*, 303. Cotgrave's *French Dict.* gives "Cautelle, a wile, cautell, deceit."

20. *Carve for himself*] Rushton quotes from Swinburn's *Treatise on Wills*, 1590: "it is not lawful for legataries to carve for themselves, taking their legacies at their own pleasure."

The safety and health of this whole state ;  
 And therefore must his choice be circumscribed  
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body  
 Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,  
 If fits your wisdom so far to believe it 25  
 As he in his particular act and place  
 May give his saying deed ; which is no further  
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.  
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,  
 If with too credent ear you list his songs, 30  
 Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open  
 To his unmaster'd importunity.  
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,  
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,  
 Out of the shot and danger of desire. 35  
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough  
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon ;  
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes ;  
 The canker galls the infants of the spring  
 Too oft before their buttons be disclosed, 40  
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth

21. *safety*] Q, *sanctity* F and many editors, *sanity* Hanmer (Theobald conj.); *health*] *the health* Warburton and many editors; *this*] Q, *the* F.  
 26. *particular act and place*] Q, *peculiar Sect and force* F. 34. *keep you in*] Q, *keepe within* F. 39. *infants*] Qq 2, 3, F; *infant* Qq 4-6, Ff 2-4.  
 40. *their*] Q, *the* F.

21. *safety*] "Sanity," as conjectured by Theobald, may be right. Safety is a trisyllable in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, v. 4, 46 : "Where he himself did rest in safety"; but in line 43 of this scene it has the usual pronunciation, and so elsewhere in Shakespeare.

26. *particular act and place*] Editors make new readings by various com-

binations from Q and F. White reads "peculiar sect and place," understanding "sect" as class, rank.

36. *chariest*] Hudson reads "Th' unchariest," that is the least reserved. "Chariest" means entirely modest.

39. *canker*] the canker-worm.

40. *buttons*] buds (Fr. *bouton*), as in *Two Noble Kinsmen*, III. i. 6.

Contagious blastments are most imminent.

Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:

Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

*Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep, 45

As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,

Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,

Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,

Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads 50

And recks not his own rede.

*Laer.* O, fear me not.

I stay too long; but here my father comes.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;

Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes! Aboard, aboard, for shame! 55

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,

And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory

Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,

46. *watchman*] Q; *watchmen* Qq 4-6, F. 49. *Whilst*] F, *Whiles* Q, which omits *like*. 51. *rede*] Singer (ed. 2), *reed* Q, *reade* F. *Enter Polonius*] Capell, after *reed* Q, after *not* F. 57. *for. There;*] Theobald; *for, there* Q 1, Q; *for there:* F. *thee*] Q 1, Q; *you* F. 59. *Look*] Q, *See* F and many editors.

47. *ungracious*] graceless. "Swear-est thou, ungracious boy?" 1 *Henry IV.* II. iv. 490.

49. *puff'd*] bloated. See *Merry Wives*, v. v. 160.

50. *primrose path*] Compare *Macbeth*, II. iii. 21.

51. *reck* . . . *rede*] cares not for his own counsel. Clar. Press cites Burns, *Epistle to a Young Friend*: "And may ye better reck the rede."

59. Parallels for several of these precepts have been pointed out by Rushton (*Shakespeare's Euphuism*, p. 46) in Lyly's *Euphues*, and by Hunter in Lord Burghley's ten precepts for his son Robert.

59. *character*] Shakespeare accents the verb either, as here, on the second syllable, or on the first, as in *Sonnets*, cxxii. 2.

Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60  
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;  
 The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel,  
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Be-  
 ware 65  
 Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,  
 Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.  
 Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;  
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.  
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70  
 But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;  
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man;  
 And they in France of the best rank and station  
 Are most select and generous, chief in that.

62. *The*] F; *Those* Q 1, Q. 63. *them to*] Q 1, F; *them unto* Q; *hoops*] *hooks*, Pope and several editors. 65. *new-hatch'd*] Q, *unhatch't* F; *comrade*] F; *courage* Q 1, Q. 67. *opposed*] Q, F; *opposer* Qq 4-6. 68. *thine*] F, *thy* Q. 74. *Are . . . that*] Rowe, followed by many editors; *Are of a most select and generall chiefe in that*: Q 1; *Or of a most select and generous, chiefe in that*: Qq 2, 3; *Ar of a most select and generous, cheefe in that*: Q 4; *Are of a most select and generous, chiefe in that*: Qq 5, 6; *Are of a most select and generous cheff in that*, Ff. See note below.

61. *vulgar*] common; be easy in your manners but do not make yourself cheap.

63. *hoops*] Clar. Press remarks in opposition to Pope's *hooks*: "grappling with hooks is the act of an enemy and not of a friend."

65. *comrade*] Accented on the second syllable, as in *1 Henry IV.* iv. i. 96. If the *courage* of Q be right, it must be understood as *bravery*, frequent in our old drama in the sense of a gallant. Examples of *courage* used of a person are cited in *New Eng. Dict.* from Hoby (1561) and W. Browne (1647).

69. *censure*] opinion, as in *Macbeth*, v. iv. 14: "our just censures."

74. *Are . . . that*] If we read "Are of a most select and generous chief in that," *chief* may be taken to mean *eminence*, as in Horman (quoted in *New Eng. Dict.*), "He wanne the chieffe at every game." If we read as here, *chief* means chiefly. The Cambridge editors suggest that "chiefe" and "of" in the margin of the MS. were meant as alternatives for "best" and "in," line 73, and got by mistake into line 74. They, therefore, favour White's "Are most select and gener-



Neither a borrower nor a lender be ; 75  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80  
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

*Laer.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

*Pol.* The time invites you; go, your servants tend.

*Laer.* Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well  
What I have said to you.

*Oph.* 'Tis in my memory lock'd, 85  
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laer.* Farewell. [Exit

*Pol.* What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

*Oph.* So please you, something touching the Lord  
Hamlet.

*Pol.* Marry, well bethought: 90  
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late

75. *lender be*] F, *lender boy* Q. 77. *dulls the edge*] F, *dulleth edge* Q,  
*dulleth the edge* Qq 4, 5. 83. *invites*] F, *inuests* Q.

ous in that." Staunton, reading "of a most," suggests *sheaf*, meaning class or set, for which he quotes examples from Jonson's plays. Malone, noting the heraldic meaning of *chef*, the upper third part of the shield, explains "approve themselves to be of a most select and generous escutcheon by their dress." Steevens conjectures "Select and generous, are most choice in that." Spence (*Notes and Queries*, 1875) proposes "Are, of a most, select and generous, chief in that" (*of a most* meaning mostly). Collier (MS.) reads: "Are of a most select and generous choice in that." I throw out the suggestion that we may retain *Or* from

Q, and emend *and*, reading "Or of a most select, are generous chief in that"—Polonius adding to "best rank and station" those who, though not of the "best," are yet of a select rank.

77. *husbandry*] thrift, as in *Macbeth*, II. i. 4.

81. *season*] Singer quotes Baret's *Alvearie*: "*To season* . . . to temper wisely, to make more pleasant and acceptable." Schmidt explains it "mature, ripen." Clar. Press compares *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 107.

83. *invites*] Theobald follows Q *invests*, explaining it "besieges, presses upon you on every side."

Given private time to you, and you yourself  
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous :

If it be so—as so 'tis put on me,  
And that in way of caution—I must tell you, 95  
You do not understand yourself so clearly  
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.  
What is between you? give me up the truth.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders  
Of his affection to me. 100

*Pol.* Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl,  
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby, 105  
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,  
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more  
dearly;

Or—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importuned me with love 110  
In honourable fashion.

105. *I'll*] F, *I will* Q. 106. *these*] Q, *his* F. 109. *Running*] Collier conj., Dyce, Cambridge, Furness; *Wrong* Q; *Roaming* F; *Wrangling* Pope and several editors; *Wringing*, Warburton, Theobald and others; *tender*] *render* F 4.

94. *put on*] communicated to, as in *As You Like It*, i. ii. 99.

102. *Unsifted*] untried.

103. *tenders*] Compare Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, i. ii.: "If now this daughter so tender'd—let me come to your own phrase, sir."

107. *Tender*] regard, take care of, hold dear—frequent in Shakespeare.

109. *Running*] Clar. Press, accept-

ing this reading proposed by Collier, observes its accordance with the figure in the previous line.

109. *fool*] Does this mean, You will present yourself to me as a fool? or, present me (to the public) as a fool? or, can "fool" mean an innocent, a baby?—for Polonius is not over-delicate in his warnings. See *Romeo and Juliet*, i. iii. 31 and 48.

*Pol.* Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

*Pol.* Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know, 115

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul

Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,

Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,

Even in their promise, as it is a-making,

You must not take for fire. From this time 120

Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;

Set your entreatments at a higher rate

Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,

Believe so much in him, that he is young,

And with a larger tether may he walk 125

Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,

Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,

Not of that dye which their investments show,

But mere implorators of unholy suits,

114. *almost . . . holy*] Q, *all the* F. 117. *Lends*] Q 1, Q; *Gives* F.  
118. *both*] *birth* Badham conj. 120. *From this time*] Q, *For this time*  
*Daughter*, F. 121. *somewhat*] F, *something* Q. 123. *parley*] F, *parle* Q.  
128. *that dye*] Q, *the eye* F.

115. *woodcocks*] birds supposed to be witless, easily taken in springes or snares. Clar. Press quotes from Gosson's *Apologie for the Schoole of Abuse*: "Cupid sets up a springe for woodcocks."

117.] To amend the verse Pope read "Oh, my daughter"; Capell, "gentle daughter"; Nicholson conj. "bavin blazes"; S. T. Coleridge, "Go to, these," or "daughter, mark you."

122. *entreatments*] Johnson explains as company, conversation, French

*entretien*; Clar. Press, solicitations; Schmidt, invitations received; *New Eng. Dict.*, conversation, interview, from the commoner meaning of negotiation, discussion.

127. *brokers*] middlemen in making bargains; used specially of panders, procurers. Furness quotes Cotgrave: "*Maquinonner*, To play the Broker, also to play the bawd."

128. *dye . . . show*] colour shown by their vesture or garb. F "the eye" may mean tint or hue, as in *Tempest*, II. i. 55.

Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds, 130  
 The better to beguile. This is for all:  
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,  
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,  
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.  
 Look to't, I charge you; come your ways. 135

*Oph.* I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE IV.—*The Platform.*

*Enter* HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now?

*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Mar.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed? I heard it not: it then draws near the  
 season 5

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance  
 shot off, within.*]

What does this mean, my lord?

130. *bawds*] Theobald, Pope (ed. 2), Hanmer, Cambridge, Furness, Hudson; *bonds* Q, F and many editors. 133. *slander*] *squander*, Collier (MS.); *moment's*] Pope; *moments* Qq 4-6; *moment*, Qq 2, 3, F. 135. *ways*] *way* Ff 2-4.

*Scene IV.*

*Scene IV.*] Capell, omitted F. 1. *it is very cold*] Q, *is it very cold?* F. 5. *Indeed?* I] Capell; *Indeed*; I Q; *Indeed I* Q 1, F; *it then*] Q, *then it* F. 6. A flourish, etc.] Malone after Capell, A flourish of trumpets and 2 peeces goes of Q, omitted F.

130. *bawds*] "Bonds" of Q, F is ing "moment," regards it as an explained as vows or (Moberly) as adjective. *Scene IV.*  
 law papers headed with religious  
 formulæ.

133. *moment's*] Clar. Press, read- 2. *eager*] sharp (Fr. *aigre*), as in L. v. 69.

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;  
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down, 10  
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't;  
But to my mind, though I am native here  
And to the manner born, it is a custom 15  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.  
This heavy-headed revel east and west  
Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations;  
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes 20  
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,  
The pith and marrow of our attribute.  
So, oft it chances in particular men,

9. *wassail*] Q 1, Q; *wassels*, F. 12. *Is it*] *It is* F 2. 14. *But*] Q,  
And F. 17-38. *This . . . scandal*] Q; omitted Q 1, F.

8. *wake*] hold a late revel; "so, in poets of a much earlier date, we find the words *watch* and *watching* employed as equivalent to 'debauch at night'" (Dyce, *Glossary*).

8. *rouse*] see I. ii. 127.

9. *up-spring*] Pope read "upstart," meaning the King. In Chapman's *Alphonsus* up-spring is named as a German dance. Elze shows that it was the *Hüpfanf*, "the last and consequently wildest dance at the old German merrymakings." The verb "reels" is taken by Staunton as a plural noun.

11. *kettle-drum*] Cleveland. in *Fuscara, or The Bee Errant*, has the line "As Danes carowse by kettle-drums."

12. *triumph of his pledge*] his glorious achievement as drinker. Howell in his *Letters* tells of the Danish King Christian IV. (1588-1649) beginning thirty-five healths during a feast—"the King was taken away at last in his chair."

18. *tax'd*] censured; frequent in Shakespeare.

19. *clepe*] call, as in *Macbeth*, III. i. 94.

20. *addition*] something added by way of distinction, style of address, as in *Lear*, I. i. 138: "The name and all the additions to a King."

22. *attribute*] what is attributed; hence reputation, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, II. iii. 125: "Much attribute he hath."

That for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
 As, in their birth,—wherein they are not  
     guilty, 25  
 Since nature cannot choose his origin,—  
 By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,  
 Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens  
 The form of plausible manners; that these  
     men,— 30  
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—  
 Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,  
 As infinite as man may undergo—  
 Shall in the general censure take corruption 35  
 From that particular fault: the dram of evil  
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt  
 To his own scandal.

27. *the*] Pope, *their* Q. 32. *star*] Q, *scar* Theobald, Pope (ed. 2).  
 33. *Their*] Theobald, Pope (ed. 2); *His* Q. 36, 37.] See note below.

24. *mole of nature*] natural blemish. Theobald suggested "mould." Prof. Hales notes in Greene's *Pandosto*: "One mole staineth the whole face."

26. *his*] its.

27. *complexion*] temperament, resulting from the supposed combination of the four "humours" in the body in various proportions; the complexions were sanguine, melancholic, choleric, and phlegmatic.

30. *plausible*] pleasing, popular. *All's Well*, I. ii. 53: "plausible words."

32. *star*] perhaps a mark like a star. *Cymbeline*, v. v. 364: "Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star."

33. *Their*] *His* of Q may be Shakespeare's word, though grammatically incorrect.

34. *undergo*] support. *Measure for Measure*, I. i. 24: "To undergo such ample grace and honour."

35. *censure*] opinion, judgment, as in I. iii. 69.

36-38. *the dram . . . scandal*] This difficult and perhaps corrupt passage is here printed as in Qq 2, 3, except that for *evil* these Qq read *eale*. The later Qq read *ease*. In II. ii. 638: "May be a devil; and the devil hath power," Qq 2, 3 have *deale*; *evil* is frequently a monosyllable in Elizabethan poetry. I can hardly regard *evil* as an emendation open to reasonable doubt. The letters *vi* of a MS. might easily be mistaken for an Elizabethan manuscript *a*; the second *l* in "evill," "devill" might be taken for an *e*, or the



*Enter GHOST.*

*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes!

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!—

Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd, 40

Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,

Thou comest in such a questionable shape

That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,

King, father; Royal Dane, O, answer me! 45

Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell

Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,

42. *intents*] Q, *events* F. 45. *father; Royal Dane, O*] Anon. conj. *St. James's Chronicle*, 15th Oct. 1761; *father, royal Dane, ô Q; Father, Royal Dane: Oh, oh F.*

MS. may have had *evile, devile*. It is possible, as Keightley suggests, that the sentence is interrupted before its completion by the Ghost's entrance. Most commentators regard it as complete, and attempt to emend "of a doubt." About eighty proposals are recorded in the *Cambridge Shakespeare*. Perhaps "often dout," meaning do out, efface, is the best of these. "Of devote" (consign to evil) seems not to have been proposed. I would suggest what I suppose to be a new line of consideration. "Scandal" is commonly regarded as a noun; although "doth" is separated from "scandal" by one of those suspensions, by qualifying clauses, characteristic of this speech, may not "doth scandal" be the verb? We have in *Cymbeline*, III. iv. 62: "Sinon's weeping Did scandal many a holy tear." Here "the dram of evil doth scandal all the noble substance." The idea is that required; the language is Shakespearean. To in Shakespeare often means *as far as*; if we met "I am scandal'd to ignominy," we

should understand it, like "sick to doomsday" (I. i. 120). The dram of evil scandals all the noble substance to its own (substance); "his" being here used for the modern "its." "Of" is frequent in the sense of *out of, by virtue of, e.g. Love's Labour's Lost*, II. 28: "Bold of your worthiness," and we still say "of your charity." Out of a mere doubt or suspicion the dram of evil degrades in reputation all the noble substance to its own. "Scandal" may have been meant to precede "to his own."

40. *spirit of health*] Clar. Press explains: "a healed or saved spirit."

43. *questionable*] inviting question. In *As You Like It*, III. ii. 393, "unquestionable," averse to conversation, occurs.

45. *father; Royal Dane, O,*] The pointing leads to "father" as the completion of the climax. This reading is adopted by Furness.

47. *canoniz'd*] The accent, as always in Shakespeare, is on the second syllable.

Have burst their cerements ; why the sepulchre,  
 Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,  
 Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws, 50  
 To cast thee up again. What may this mean,  
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,  
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
 Making night hideous ; and we fools of nature  
 So horridly to shake our disposition 55  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?  
 Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?  
[Ghost beckons Hamlet.]

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
 As if it some impartment did desire  
 To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action 60  
 It waves you to a more removed ground :  
 But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means.

*Ham.* It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear ?  
 I do not set my life at a pin's fee ; 65  
 And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
 Being a thing immortal as itself ?  
 It waves me forth again ; I'll follow it.

49. *inurn'd*] F, *interr'd* Q 1, Q. 53. *Revisit'st*] F 4, *Revisites* Q,  
*Revisits* F. 56. *the reaches*] Q, *thee* ; *reaches* F. 61. *waves*] Q 1, Q ;  
*wafis* F. 63. *I will*] Q, *will* F.

52. *complete*] Accented here on the first syllable. So in Massinger, *The Emperor of the East*, IV. iv. : "To march ten leagues a day in complete armour."

54. *fools of nature*] The presence of the supernatural shows how the limitations of nature cheat and befool us.

*Hor.* What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff 70

That beetles o'er his base into the sea,

And there assume some other horrible form,

Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason

And draw you into madness? think of it;

The very place puts toys of desperation, 75

Without more motive, into every brain

That looks so many fathoms to the sea

And hears it roar beneath.

*Ham.* It waves me still.—

Go on; I'll follow thee.

*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.

*Ham.* Hold off your hands! 80

*Hor.* Be ruled; you shall not go.

*Ham.* My fate cries out,

And makes each petty artery in this body

As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

[*Ghost beckons.*

Still am I call'd? Unhand me, gentlemen;

[*Breaking from them.*

72. *assume*] Q, *assumes* F. 74. *draw*] *drive* Q 1. 75-78. *The very . . . beneath*] Q, omitted F. 78. *waves*] Q, *wafts* F. 80. *hands*] Q, *hand* F. 84. *call'd?*] F, *cald*, Q.

73. *deprive your sovereignty of reason*] Warburton, followed by Hanmer, reads *deprave*. For *deprive* see *Rape of Lucrece*, 1186 and 1752. Caldecott explains: "Dispossess the sovereignty of your reason." In the *Historie of Hamblet*, IV., "deprive himself" means lose the right to the throne.

75-78.] Delius suggests that these

lines were omitted from the F because their substance, enlarged and elaborated, had been introduced into *King Lear*.

75. *toys*] freaks. See *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. i. 119: "inconstant toy."

83. *Nemean*] So accented also in *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. i. 90.

83. *nerve*] muscle or sinew; so "nervy arm," *Coriolanus*, II. i. 177.

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets  
me: 85

I say, away!—Go on; I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*]

*Hor.* He waxes desperate with imagination.

*Mar.* Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

*Hor.* Have after.—To what issue will this come?

*Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. 90

*Hor.* Heaven will direct it.

*Mar.* Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*]

# SCENE V.—*Another Part of the Platform.*

*Enter GHOST and HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Whither wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no  
further.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Ham.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,  
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost!

*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing 5  
To what I shall unfold.

*Ham.* Speak; I am bound to hear.

## *Scene v.*

*Scene v.] Capell. 1. Whither] Q 1, Q; Where F.*

85. *lets]* hinders.

91. *it]* the *issue* of line 89.

cher's *The Woman-Hater* (about 1607),  
II. i. (vol. i. p. 37, ed. Dyce).

6. *bound]* Delius supposes that  
Hamlet uses this word in the sense of  
*ready addressed*, while the Ghost takes  
it as meaning bound in duty.

## *Scene v.*

6, 7. *Speak . . . shalt hear]* These  
words are playfully quoted in Flet-

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

*Ham.* What?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit;

Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, 10

And for the day confined to fast in fires,

Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature

Are burnt and purged away. But that I am  
forbid

To tell the secrets of my prison-house,

I could a tale unfold whose lightest word 15

Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,

Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their  
spheres,

Thy knotted and combined locks to part

And each particular hair to stand an end,

Like quills upon the fretful porpentine: 20

But this eternal blazon must not be

To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!

If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

*Ham.* O God!

18. *knotted*] Q 1, Q; *knotty* F. 19. *an end*] *on end* Q 1 and many  
editors. 20. *fretful*] Q 1, F; *fearefull* Q. 22. *List, list,*] Q, *list*  
*Hamlet*, F. 23. *love—*] Rowe; *love*. Q, F. 24. *God*] Q, *Heaven* F.

11. *to fast in*] Chaucer, *Persones Tale*, writes: "And moreover the miseise of helle shal been in defaute of mete and drinke" (Skeat's ed. iv. 577). In *Dekker his Dreame* (1620) one of the souls burning in hell roars for "cookes to give him meate." Theobald conjectured "confined fast"; Warburton read "too fast in"; Heath proposed "to lasting"; Steevens "to waste in."

19. *an end*] So in 2 *Henry VI*.

III. ii. 318: "Mine hair be fix'd an end" F ("on end" Qq).

20. *porpentine*] porcupine, as in *Comedy of Errors* III. i. 116. "Porcupine," given here by many editors, first appeared in Q 1676.

21. *eternal blazon*] promulgation of eternity. But "eternal" was used by Shakespeare as an adjective expressing abhorrence—"eternal devil," *Julius Caesar*, I. ii. 160; "eternal villain," *Othello*, IV. ii. 130; possibly it has a like sense here.

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder. 25

*Ham.* Murder?

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is,  
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift  
As meditation or the thoughts of love, 30  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt;  
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,  
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:  
'Tis given out that, sleeping in mine orchard, 35  
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark  
Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abused; but know, thou noble youth,  
The serpent that did sting thy father's life  
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.* O my prophetic soul! 40  
My uncle?

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—

26. *Murder?* F, *Murther*. Q, *Murder!* Q 6 and many editors. 27. *best* least Q 1. 29. *Haste me*] Q, *Hast, hast me* F. 33. *roots*] Q 1, Q; *rots* F and many editors. 35. *'Tis*] Q, *It's* F; *mine*] F, *my* Q. 41. *My*] Q, *Mine* F. *uncle?*] Q, F; *Uncle:* Q 4; *Uncle*. Q 5; *Uncle!* Q 6 and many editors. 43. *wit*] Pope; *wits* Q, F; *with*] Q, *hath* F, and F 4.

30. *meditation . . . love*] Hamlet's comparisons are appropriate to him—those of a thinker and a lover.

33. *roots*] The F *rots* receives some support from *Ant. and Cleop.* I. iv. 47: "rot itself."

33. *wharf*] seems used for bank of a river. See *Ant. and Cleop.* II. ii. 218.

37. *forged process*] falsified account.

Clar. Press suggests "official narrative," comparing the French *procès verbal*.

40. *O . . . soul*] This occurs also in Fletcher's *The Double Marriage*, II. iv. (vol. vi. 351, ed. Dyce); in Massinger's *The Bondman*, IV. i., and his *Emperor of the East* (near end of Act I.).



O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power  
 So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust 45  
 The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:  
 O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!  
 From me, whose love was of that dignity  
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
 I made to her in marriage; and to decline 50  
 Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor  
 To those of mine!  
 But virtue, as it never will be moved,  
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,  
 So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd, 55  
 Will sate itself in a celestial bed,  
 And prey on garbage.  
 But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;  
 Brief let me be. Sleeping within mine orchard,  
 My custom always in the afternoon, 60  
 Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,  
 With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,  
 And in the porches of mine ears did pour

45. *to his*] Q, Ff 3, 4; *to to this* F; *to this* F 2. 47. *a*] omitted in Qq except Q 6. 56. *sate*] F, *sort* Q, *seat* Ff 3, 4 (Q 1 *fate*, a misprint). 58. *morning*] Q, *mornings* F. 59. *mine*] F, *my* Q. 60. *in*] Q 1, F; *of* Q. 62. *hebenon*] F; *Hebona* Q 1, Q. 63. *mine*] F, *my* Q.

61. *secure*] careless, unsuspecting, accented as in *Othello*, IV. i. 72: "To lip a wanton in a secure couch." Compare *Merry Wives*, II. i. 241: "a secure fool."

62. *hebenon*] Grey conjectured *henebon*, meaning henbane. Douce, having found an example of *Ebeno*, ebony, suggested that this was meant. Elze conjectured *hemlock*; Beisly, *enoron*, one of the names for deadly nightshade. Nicholson (*N. Sh. Soc.*

*Transactions*, 1880-82) shows that the yew was considered a most deadly poison; that Ebenus was mediævally applied to different trees, including the yew; that Marlowe, Spenser, and Reynolds use Heben for the yew; and he maintains that in the words "cursed" and "an enmity with blood of man" Shakespeare was adopting the description of the yew found in Holland's *Pliny*, 1600.

The leperous distilment ; whose effect  
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man 65  
 That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
 The natural gates and alleys of the body ;  
 And with a sudden vigour it doth posset  
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
 The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine ; 70  
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,  
 All my smooth body.  
 Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand  
 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd ; 75  
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
 Unhousel'd, disappointed, unaneled ;  
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
 With all my imperfections on my head :  
 Oh, horrible ! Oh, horrible ! most horrible ! 80  
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;

67. *alleys*] Hanmer ; *allies* Q 1, Q, F. 68. *posset*] F, *possesse* Q.  
 71. *bark'd*] Q 1, Q ; *bak'd* F. 75. *of queen*] Q, and *Queen* F.

68. *vigour*] Staunton proposed *rigour*.

69. *eager*] Ff *aygre*. Cotgrave has "Aigre : Eagre, sharpe, tart, biting, sower."

71. *instant*] instantaneous, as in II. ii. 548.

75. *dispatch'd*] deprived, which is the reading of Q 1.

76. *blossoms*] White reads *blossom*, which Dyce had suggested ; but compare *Winter's Tale*, v. ii. 135 : "the blossoms of their fortune."

77. *Unhousel'd*] without receiving the eucharist (Old English *husel*). Tyrwhitt compares *Morte Darthur*, xxi. 12 (Lancelot dying) : "So when he was howselyd and anelyd."

77. *disappointed*] Pope read *un-anointed* ; Theobald, *unappointed*, comparing *Measure for Measure*, III. i. 60. Boucher conjectures *un-soiled*, unabsolved. The meaning is, without equipment for the last journey.

77. *unaneled*] Unanointed with extreme unction. See quotation from *Morte Darthur* above. Pope mistook it for having no knell rung.

80.] Given to Hamlet by several editors. Garrick, as Hamlet, pronounced this line ; so does Sir H. Irving. Clarke observes that triple iteration is characteristic of the Ghost's diction.

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be  
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.  
 But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,  
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive 85  
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,  
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!  
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,  
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire; 90  
 Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [Exit.

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?  
 And shall I couple hell? Oh, fie! Hold, hold, my  
 heart;  
 And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,  
 But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee? 95  
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat  
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee?  
 Yea, from the table of my memory  
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past, 100

91. *Adieu, adieu, adieu!*] Q, *Adue, adue, Hamlet*: F and many editors.  
 93. *Hold, hold,*] Q; *hold* Qq 4-6, F. 95. *stiffly*] F, *swiftly* Q.  
 95, 97. *thee?*] F, *thee*, Q. 96. *while*] F, *whiles* Q.

83. *luxury*] Dyce (*Gloss.*): lasciviousness, its only sense in Shakespeare.

90. *uneffectual*] Warburton (approved by Dyce) explains: "shining without heat." Steevens, "lost in the morning light." See *Pericles*, II. iii. 43.

93. *Oh, fie*] Capell, Steevens, Mitford, Dyce regard these words as probably an interpolation.

97. *globe*] Hamlet's hand is upon his forehead. See Appendix III.

98. *table*] tablet, as in *Two Gentle-*

*men of Verona*, II. vii. 3. In Mas-singer, *The Emperor of the East*, IV. v., we find "Writ in the table of my memory."

99. *fond*] foolish.

99. *records*] The accent in Shakespeare is variable, on the first, or (as probably here) on the second syllable.

100. *saws*] maxims, as in *As You Like It*, II. vii. 156.

100. *pressures*] impressions. See III. ii. 29. Elsewhere Shakespeare uses *impressure* in the same sense,

That youth and observation copied there;  
 And thy commandment all alone shall live  
 Within the book and volume of my brain,  
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!  
 O most pernicious woman! 105  
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!  
 My tables,—meet it is I set it down,  
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;  
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.—  
 [Writing.

So, uncle, there you are.—Now to my word; 110  
 It is "Adieu, adieu! remember me."

I have sworn 't.

*Hor.* [Within.] My Lord, my lord!

*Mar.* [Within.] Lord Hamlet!

*Hor.* [Within.] Heaven secure him!

*Ham.* So be it!

104. *yes*] Q, *yes, yes* F. 107. *My tables,—*] Pope, (*My tables*) Q 1, *My tables*, Q, *My Tables*, *My Tables*; F. 109. *I'm*] F, *I am* Q. [Writing.] Rowe; omitted Q, F. 113. *Hor.* [Within.] *Hor.* and *Mar.* within F, *Hora.* Q (see note below). *Heaven*] F; *Heavens* Q 1, Q. 114. *Ham.* *So be it*] Q, given to Marcellus in F.

107. *tables*] memorandum-book, as in *2 Henry IV.* II. iv. 289, and *Sonnets*, cxxii. 1. Hamlet's writing in his tables is a scholar's fantastic relief for over-wrought feelings, suggested to him by "table of my memory."

110. *word*] Steevens explains as "watch-word"; perhaps order, word of command, as in *Julius Cæsar*, v. iii. 5: "Brutus gave the word too early."

113. *Within*] Capell first marked thus the speech of Marcellus and that of Horatio which follows it. Wright (*Cambridge Sh.* vii. p. 600) thinks

the transference by Capell of the entrance of Horatio and Marcellus to follow line 116 unnecessary; they may enter at "My lord, my lord!" but, in the darkness, may be unseen by Hamlet.

114.] Many editors follow F in assigning "So be it!" to Marcellus. "There is something highly solemn and proper," observes Capell, "in making Hamlet say the Amen to a benediction pronounced on himself." Furness asks, "May it not refer to the conclusion of Hamlet's writing in his tables?"

*Hor.* [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord! 115

*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come.

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.*

*Mar.* How is 't, my noble lord?

*Hor.* What news, my lord?

*Ham.* O, wonderful!

*Hor.* Good my lord, tell it.

*Ham.* No; you will reveal it.

*Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord. 120

*Ham.* How say you, then; would heart of man once think it?

But you'll be secret?

*Hor., Mar.* Ay, by heaven, my lord.

*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark  
But he's an arrant knave.

*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the  
grave 125

115. *Hor.*] Q 1, F; *Mar.* Q. 116. *bird*] F, and Q, *boy* Q 1. Enter *Horatio* and *Marcellus*] Capell; placed after Hamlet's *I have sworn't* in Q, after *My lord, my lord!* in F. 117. *Hor.* *What news, my lord?*] omitted Qq 4-6. 118. *Ham.*] *Hora.* Qq 4, 5. 119. *you will!*] Q, *you'l* F. 121. *it?*] Q 1, F; *it.* Q. 122. *secret?*] F, *secret.* Q; *my lord.*] Q 1, F; omitted Q. 123. *ne'er*] F, *never* Q.

115. *Illo*] Capell considered this speech "too light for Horatio," and assigned it with Q to Marcellus.

The call, answered by Hamlet in falconer's fashion, is not meant as such by the speaker, whether he be Marcellus or Horatio. In *The Birth of Merlin*, Prince Uter's "So ho, boy, so, ho, illo ho!" is a mere halloo.

121. *once*] ever, as in *Ant.* and *Cleop.* v. ii. 50.

123. *Denmark*] Seymour suggests that Hamlet at this word breaks off his intended disclosure, pauses, and gives it a jesting turn. Sir H. Irving adopts this rendering, glancing at Marcellus, as if his presence rendered the confidence unwise.

116. *Hillo . . . come*] The cry of a falconer to his birds. Steevens quotes

To tell us this.

*Ham.* Why, right; you are i' the right;  
And so, without more circumstance at all,  
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part;  
You, as your business and desire shall point you;  
For every man hath business and desire, 130  
Such as it is; and, for mine own poor part,  
Look you, I'll go pray.

*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;  
Yes, faith, heartily.

*Hor.* There's no offence, my lord. 135

*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,  
And much offence too. Touching this vision  
here,  
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you;  
For your desire to know what is between us,

126. *us*] *you* Q 1; *i' the*] Capell, *in the* Q, *i' th'* F. 129. *desire*] Q;  
*desires* Q 1, F. 130. *hath*] Q, *ha's* F. 131. *mine*] F, *my* Q. 132. *Look*  
*you, I'll*] F, *I will* Q. 133. *whirling*] Theobald, *wherling* Q 1, *whurling*  
Q, *hurling* F. 134. *I'm*] F, *I am* Q. 136. *Horatio*] Q 1, Q; *my*  
*Lord* F. 137. *too*. *Touching*] Rowe, *too, touching* Q 1, F; *to, touching* Q;  
*too: touching* Q 6.

127. *circumstance*] beating about the bush, circumlocution, as in *Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 154.

136. *Saint Patrick*] In connection with "the offence" there is special propriety in the oath. It was given out that a serpent stung Hamlet's father; the serpent now wears his crown. St. Patrick was the proper saint to take cognisance of such an offence, having banished serpents from Ireland. In *Richard II.* II. i. 157, Shakespeare alludes to the freedom of Ireland from venomous creatures. Campion in his *History of Ireland*, written in 1571, mentions the legend.

In Shirley's *Saint Patrick for Ireland*, serpents come on the stage, are banned by the saint, and creep away. Tschischwitz supposes that the oath alludes to St. Patrick's Purgatory, and I find mention of this place of torment in Dekker's *Olde Fortunatus* (Pearson's *Dekker*, vol. i. p. 155).

136. *Horatio*] Corson defends the F "my lord," as a retort to Horatio's "my lord," line 135.

138. *honest*] Hudson supposes that this means a real ghost, just what it appears to be, not "the Devil" in "a pleasing shape."



O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good  
friends, 140

As you are friends, scholars and soldiers,  
Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is't, my lord? we will.

*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen to-night.

*Hor., Mar.* My lord, we will not.

*Ham.* Nay, but swear't.

*Hor.* In faith, 145

My lord, not I.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.

*Ham.* Upon my sword.

*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.

*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-  
penny?— 150

Come on; you hear this fellow in the cellarage;  
Consent to swear.

*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.

149. Beneath] Capell; Ghost cries under the Stage Q, F. 150. Ah] F  
*Ha Q.*

147. *sword.*] The hilt, having the form of a cross, is sworn on. See *1 Henry IV.* ii. iv. 371. Dyce quotes from Mallet's *Northern Antiquities* (i. 216, ed. 1770) to show that "the custom of swearing on a sword prevailed even among the barbarous worshippers of Odin."

150. *true-penny*] Forby (*Vocab. of East Anglia*): Hearty old fellow. Collier says he has learnt, from Sheffield authorities, that it is a mining term, signifying an indication in the soil of the direction in which ore

is to be found. Marston, *The Malcontent*, 1604, III. iii., has an echo of this scene: "Illo, ho, ho ho! arte there, old true-penny." Middleton, in *Blurt, Master-Constable*, names a page Truepenny. Hamlet's recoil from horror to half-hysterical jesting is justified to his own consciousness as intended to divert the conjectures of his companions from the dreadful nature of the Ghost's disclosure, which he cannot reveal to Horatio in the presence of Marcellus.

*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen.

Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

155

*Ham.* *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our ground.—

Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword:

Never to speak of this that you have heard;

Swear by my sword.

160

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast?

A worthy pioner!—Once more remove, good friends.

*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome. 165

There are more things in heaven and earth,

Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

170

As I perchance hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on,

153. *seen.*] F, *seene* Q, *seene*, Qq 4-6. 156. *our*] Q, for F. 157-160.] Q has a comma after *sword*, line 158, and transposes lines 159, 160, with no point between *sword* and *never*; F. as here, but with comma after *sword*, line 158, and colon after *heard*, line 159; later Ff put full stop after *sword*, line 158. 159. *heard*] *seene* Q 1. 161. *Swear*] Q 1, F; *Sweare* by his sword. Q. 162. *earth*] Q 1, Q; *ground* F. 167. *your*] Q 1, Q; *our* F.

163. *pioner*] pioneer, and accented, as in *Othello*, III. iii. 346.

165. *as . . . welcome*] Being a stranger, take it in. Mason needlessly suggests seem not to know it. Middleton, *Women Beware Women*, II. ii.: "She's a stranger, madam. The more should be her welcome."

167. *your*] Several editors prefer *our* Ff. In either case, the emphasis is probably on *philosophy*. Compare for this use of *your* IV. iii. 22: "Your worm is your only emperor for diet."

172. *antic*] bizarre, fantastic; *Romeo and Juliet*, II. iv. 29, "antic . . . fantasticoes."

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,  
 With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,  
 Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase, 175  
 As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an if we  
 would,"  
 Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, an if they  
 might,"  
 Or such ambiguous giving out, to note  
 That you know aught of me: this not to do,  
 So grace and mercy at your most need help you, 180  
 Swear.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath.*] Swear.

*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!

[*They swear.*

So, gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you;  
 And what so poor a man as Hamlet is 185  
 May do, to express his love and friending to you,  
 God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;  
 And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.  
 The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite,  
 That ever I was born to set it right!— 190  
 Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

173. *times*] Q 1, Q; *time* F. 174. *this head-shake*] Q 1, Q, (without hyphen), *thus, head shake* F. 176. *Well, well,*] Q, *well*, F. 176, 177. *an if . . . an if*] Hanmer; *and if . . . and if* Q, F. 177. *they*] Q 1, Q; *there* F. 179-181. *this . . . Swear*] Knight's punctuation of F text, *this doe sweare, So . . . you.* Q. 184. *I do*] omitted Ff 2-4.

174. *encumber'd*] commonly explained as "folded." Perhaps intertwined, Hamlet taking the arm of Horatio or Marcellus as he speaks. In Fenton's *Monophylo*, B. ii. 12, I find "encumbred laborinth."

178. *giving out*] intimation, as in *Measure for Measure*, I. iv. 54, *Othello*, IV. i. 131.

178. *to note*] Theobald and other editors correct the grammatical irregularity by reading *denote*.

## ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Room in Polonius's House.**Enter* POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.*Pol.* Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.*Rey.* I will, my lord.*Pol.* You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,  
Before you visit him, to make inquire  
Of his behaviour.*Rey.* My lord, I did intend it. 5*Pol.* Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,  
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;  
And how, and who, what means, and where they  
keep,  
What company, at what expense; and finding  
By this encompassment and drift of question 10  
That they do know my son, come you more nearer  
Than your particular demands will touch it;  
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him,  
As thus, "I know his father and his friends,  
And in part him." Do you mark this, Rey-  
naldo? 15

*Enter Polonius and Reynaldo*] *Enter* old *Polonius* with his man or two Q. 1. *this*] Q, *his* F; *these*] Q, *these two* Qq 4-6, *those* Ff 2-4. 3. *marvellous*] Qq 4-6, *meruiles* Qq 2, 3, *marvels* F. 4. *to make inquire*] Q, *you make inquiry* F. 11, 12. *nearer Than*] Q, F (spelling *Then*); *neere Than* F 2; *near Then* F 3; *near, Then* F 4. 14. *As*] Q, *And* F.

4. *inquire*] so "strange inquire":  
*Pericles*, III. Prologue 22.

7. *Danskers*] Danes.

11-13.] The opposition is not between particular (which perhaps means *personal*) demands and any other inquiries, but between demands or

questions and the profession of acquaintance: leave questioning, and come nearer by throwing out a bait of imperfect knowledge. Jennens and Keightley read "nearer; Then"; but in what follows there are no "particular demands."

*Rey.* Ay, very well, my lord.

*Pol.* "And in part him; but," you may say, "not well;  
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild,  
Addicted" so and so; and there put on him  
What forgeries you please; marry, none so  
rank

20

As may dishonour him; take heed of that;  
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips  
As are companions noted and most known  
To youth and liberty.

*Rey.* As gaming, my lord.

*Pol.* Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling, 25  
Drabbing; you may go so far.

*Rey.* My lord, that would dishonour him.

*Pol.* Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,  
That he is open to incontinency; 30  
That's not my meaning; but breathe his faults so  
quaintly

26. *Drabbing*] Or *drabbing* Q 1. 28. *no*] F, omitted Q.

25. *fencing*] Perhaps named to show how Polonius regards the other supposed outbreaks of his son—as to be classed with addiction to the fencing-school. Fencers, however, had a like legal disrepute with players. In Middleton's *Spanish Gipsy*, II. ii. Sancho comes in "from playing with fencers," having lost cloak, band, and rapier at dice. The ill repute of fencers appears from other passages in Elizabethan drama. In Dekker's *Gul's Horn-Booke* he speaks of the danger to a rich young man of being "set upon" by fencers and cony-catchers (Dekker, ed. Grosart, vol. ii. p. 213).

28. *season*] qualify; see I. ii. 192.

29. *another*] Theobald conjectured *an utter*, which was adopted by Hanmer and some other editors; but Theobald himself withdrew the suggestion. Malone explains: "a very different and more scandalous failing: habitual incontinency." Hudson reads "open of incontinency," that he indulges his passions openly. Perhaps Malone is right; Polonius, who loves nice distinctions, sees a difference between occasional "drabbing" and lying wide open to the access of vice.

31. *quaintly*] delicately, ingeniously, as in *Merchant of Venice*, II. iv. 6.

That they may seem the taints of liberty,  
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,  
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,  
Of general assault.

*Rey.* But, my good lord,— 35

*Pol.* Wherefore should you do this?

*Rey.* Ay, my lord,

I would know that.

*Pol.* Marry, sir, here's my drift,

And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant;  
You laying these slight sullies on my son,  
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the work-  
ing, 40

Mark you,

Your party in converse, him you would sound,

Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes

The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured

He closes with you in this consequence; 45

"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentle-  
man,"

According to the phrase or the addition

Of man and country.

*Rey.* Very good, my lord.

38. *warrant*] F, *wit* Q. 39. *sullies*] F, Qq 4, 5, 6; *sallies* Qq 2, 3.  
40. *i' the*] F, *with* Q. 42. *converse*,] Q, *converse*; F. 47. *or*] Q,  
and F.

34. *unreclaimed*] untamed. Clar. Press quotes Cotgrave, "Adomes-tiquer: To tame, reclaim, make gentle."

35. *Of general assault*] which assails youth almost universally.

38. *fetch of warrant*] a warranted device.

42. *converse*] "Shakespeare uses the noun only three times, and with the accent as here" (Rolfe).

45. *He . . . consequence*] "He falls in with you into this conclusion" (Caldecott); "in thus following up your remark" (Schmidt).

47. *addition*] title, as in I. iv. 20.



*Pol.* And then, sir, does he this,—he does—what  
was I about to say? By the mass, I was 50  
about to say something; where did I leave?

*Key.* At “closes in the consequence,” at “friend or  
so,” and “gentleman.”

*Pol.* At “closes in the consequence,” ay, marry;  
He closes with you thus: “I know the gentle-  
man; 55

I saw him yesterday, or t’ other day,

Or then, or then, with such, or such, and, as you say,

There was he gaming, there o’ertook in’s rouse,

There falling out at tennis;” or perchance,

“I saw him enter such a house of sale,” 60

*Videlicet*, a brothel, or so forth.

See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,

With windlasses and with assays of bias, 65

49. *does he this,—he does—*] *does he this?* *He does*: F, *doos at this, a doos*, Q.  
50. *By the mass*] Q, omitted in F. 51. *something*] *nothing* Ff 2-4.  
52, 53. *at “friend . . . gentleman”*] omitted Q. 55. *closes with you thus*] F, *closes thus* Q, *closeth with him thus* Q 1. 57. *or such*] Q, *and such* F.  
58. *he,*] F, α Q. 60. *such*] Q, F; *such or such* Qq 4, 5; *such and such* Q 6.  
63. *takes*] F, *take* Q.

49-51.] *And then . . . leave?*  
Prose first by Malone. The attempts  
to justify Q and F by constructing  
verse miss the point that Polonius’s  
wits have failed him, and he topples  
from verse to incoherency in prose.  
Three lines, ending *say? . . . some-  
thing . . . leave? Q*; ending *this?  
. . . say? . . . leave? F*.

52, 53.] Prose first in *Globe Shake-  
speare*. Reynaldo steps down from  
verse to enable Polonius to recover  
his train of ideas. Two lines ending  
*consequence” . . . “gentleman” F*.

58. *o’ertook*] Clar. Press: a “eu-  
phemism for drunk”; perhaps it  
means only surprised, caught. For  
*rouse*, see I. ii. 127.

64. *of reach*] Clar. Press: we who are  
far-sighted; compare “we of taste and  
feeling,” *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, IV. ii.  
30. Q 1 has “being men of reach.”

65. *windlasses*] winding turns. So  
in Golding’s *Ovid*, B. vii.:

“like a wily fox he  
runs not forth directly out,  
Nor makes a windlass over all the  
champion fields about”;

By indirections find directions out: .  
 So, by my former lecture and advice,  
 Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

*Rey.* My lord, I have.

*Pol.*

God be wi' you ; fare ye well.

*Rey.* Good my lord !

70

*Pol.* Observe his inclination in yourself.

*Rey.* I shall, my lord.

*Pol.* And let him ply his music.

*Rey.*

Well, my lord.

*Pol.* Farewell !

[*Exit Reynaldo.*]

*Enter OPHELIA.*

How now, Ophelia ! what's the matter ?

*Oph.* Oh, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted ! 75

*Pol.* With what, i' the name of God ?

*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,

69. *ye well*] Q, *you well* F. 75. *Oh, my lord*] Q, *Alas* F. 76. *i' the*] Capell, *i' th* Q, *in the* F ; *God*] Q, *Heaven* F. 77. *closet*] Q, *chamber* F.

and in *Apollo Shroving*: "See how fortune came with a windlace about again."

65. *assays of bias*] a metaphor from bowls, the player sending his bowl towards the jack in a curve, knowing that the bias—the oblique line of motion—will bring it right.

66. *By . . . out*] By indirect means find out direct indications.

71. *Observe . . . yourself*] Johnson: "Perhaps this means in your own person, not by spies." Clar. Press: "Possibly it means conform your own conduct to his inclinations." Hanmer and Warburton read "e'en yourself." "In yourself" may possibly mean in regard to yourself.

73. *music*] Vischer explains: "His

son may gamble, drink, swear, quarrel, drab, . . . only—let him ply his music: true cavalier-breeding!" Clarke: "Let him go on to what tune he pleases," which would agree well with the explanation of line 71 suggested by Clar. Press.

77. *closet*] a private chamber, as in III. ii. 346. This is the only entirely sincere meeting of Hamlet with Ophelia in the play; and it is entirely silent—the hopeless farewell of Hamlet. Can her love discover him through his disguise of distraction? He reads nothing in her face but fright; he cannot utter a word, and feels that the estranging sea has flowed between them. In no true sense do they ever meet again.

Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced ;  
 No hat upon his head ; his stockings foul'd,  
 Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle ; 80  
 Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;  
 And with a look so piteous in purport  
 As if he had been loosed out of hell  
 To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

*Pol.* Mad for thy love ?

*Oph.* My lord, I do not know, 85  
 But truly I do fear it.

*Pol.* What said he ?

*Oph.* He took me by the wrist and held me hard ;  
 Then goes he to the length of all his arm,  
 And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
 He falls to such perusal of my face 90  
 As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so ;  
 At last, a little shaking of mine arm,  
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
 He raised a sigh so piteous and profound  
 That it did seem to shatter all his bulk 95  
 And end his being ; that done, he lets me go,  
 And with his head over his shoulder turn'd  
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes ;

87. *and . . . hard*] omitted Ff 2-4. 94. *piteous*] Q, F ; *hideous* Ff 2-4.  
 95. *That*] F, *As* Q. 97. *shoulder*] Q, *shoulders* F.

78. *unbraced*] unfastened, as in *Julius Caesar*, I. iii. 48.

80. *Ungarter'd*] See the conventional lover described in *As You Like It*, III. ii. 398.

80. *down-gyved*] fallen to the ancle, like gyves or fetters. Theobald read, with Qq 4, 5, *down-gyred*, explaining it "rolled down to the ancle."

82. *purport*] Clar. Press says ac-

cented on last syllable. But no other example of the word occurs in Shakespeare.

90. *perusal*] study. See *peruse*, IV. vii. 137.

91. *Long*] Pope read *Long time*.

95. *bulk*] frame. Florio (1611) has "Pettorata, a shock against the breast or bulk." See *Rape of Lucrece*, 467 ; "her heart . . . Beating her bulk."

- For out o' doors he went without their help,  
And to the last bended their light on me. 100
- Pol.* Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.  
This is the very ecstasy of love;  
Whose violent property fordoes itself  
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,  
As oft as any passion under heaven 105  
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—  
What, have you given him any hard words of late?
- Oph.* No, my good lord, but, as you did command,  
I did repel his letters and denied  
His access to me.
- Pol.* That hath made him mad. 110  
I am sorry that with better heed and judgement  
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle  
And meant to wreck thee; but beshrew my jealousy!  
By heaven, it is as proper to our age  
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions 115  
As it is common for the younger sort  
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
99. *o' doors*] Theobald, *adoors* (with various spellings) Q, F; *help*] Q 1, F; *helps* Q. 101. *Come,*] Q; omitted F. 103. *fordoes*] *forgoes* Qq 4-6.  
105. *passion*] F, *passions* Q. 106. *sorry,—*] Capell; *sorry*, Q, F (Q 6 *sorrie*.); *sorry*. Globe. 111. *heed*] Q, *speed* F. 112. *quoted*] F, *coted* Q; *fear'd*] Q, *feare* F. 114. *By heaven*] Q 1, Q; *It seemes* F.
102. *ecstasy*] madness, as in III. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iv. 31: "What curious eye doth quote deformities?"  
i. 168, and elsewhere in this play.  
103. *fordoes*] destroys; the *for* is here negative, as in v. i. 243: it is intensive in "fordone," *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 381.  
106. *I am sorry,—*] Capell's pointing indicates a broken sentence. Polonius takes it up again in line 111.  
111. *heed*] Theobald preferred the F *speed*, meaning success.  
112. *quoted*] noted, observed, as in

This must be known; which, being kept close,  
 might move  
 More grief to hide than hate to utter love.  
 Come. [Exeunt. 120

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*Flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ,  
 GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants.*

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!  
 Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
 The need we have to use you did provoke  
 Our hasty sending. Something have you heard  
 Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it, 5  
 Since not the exterior nor the inward man  
 Resembles that it was. What it should be,  
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him  
 So much from the understanding of himself,  
 I cannot dream of: I entreat you both, 10  
 That, being of so young days brought up with him,  
 And since so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,  
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
 Some little time; so by your companies  
 To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather 15

120. *Come.*] Q, omitted F.

*Scene II.*

5. *call*] Q, *I call* F. 6. *Since not*] F, *Sith not* Q. 10. *dream*] Q,  
*deeme* F. 12. *since*] F, *sith* Q; *humour*] F, *havior* Q.

118, 119. *which . . . love*] "The king may be angry at my telling of Hamlet's love; but more grief would come from hiding it" (Moberly).  
 Hammer read "to hide hate, than."

*Scene II.*

2. *Moreover that*] Over and above that.

So much as from occasion you may glean,  
Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,  
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you,  
And sure I am two men there are not living 20  
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you  
To show us so much gentry and good will  
As to expend your time with us awhile  
For the supply and profit of our hope,  
Your visitation shall receive such thanks 25  
As fits a king's remembrance.

*Ros.* Both your majesties  
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,  
Put your dread pleasures more into command  
Than to entreaty.

*Guil.* But we both obey,  
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent 30  
To lay our service freely at your feet,  
To be commanded.

*King.* Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

*Queen.* Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz;  
And I beseech you instantly to visit 35  
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,  
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

16. *occasion*] Q, *occasions* F. 17. *Whether . . . thus*] Q, omitted F.  
20. *are*] F, *is* Q. 23. *expend*] *extend* Qq 4, 5. 29. *But we*] Q, *We* F.  
31. *service*] Q, *services* F. 32. *To be commanded*] omitted Qq 4-6.  
36. *you*] Q, *ye* F. 37. *these*] Q, *the* F.

17. *Whether*] To be pronounced or gentry, kindliness, naturall good-  
as a monosyllable, as often else- nesse. Generositas."

22. *gentry*] courtesy. Singer quotes 30. *bent*] limit of capacity; meta-  
Baret's *Alvearie*: "Gentlemanliness phor from the extent to which a bow  
may be drawn.



*Guil.* Heavens make our presence and our practices  
Pleasant and helpful to him!

*Queen.* Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and  
some Attendants.*]

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord, 40  
Are joyfully return'd.

*King.* Thou still hast been the father of good news.

*Pol.* Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,  
I hold my duty as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God and to my gracious king; 45  
And I do think, or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure  
As it hath used to do, that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

*King.* Oh, speak of that; that do I long to hear. 50

*Pol.* Give first admittance to the ambassadors;  
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

*King.* Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found

The head and source of all your son's distemper. 55

*Queen.* I doubt it is no other but the main,—

39. *Ay*] Q, omitted F. 43. *Assure you*] F, *I assure* Q. 45. *and*] Q,  
one F, Caldecott, Knight, Collier. 47. *sure*] *be sure* Ff 3, 4. 48. *it*  
*hath*] Q, *I have* F. 50. *do I*] Q, *I do* F. 52. *fruit*] Q, *newes* F.  
Exit Polonius] omitted Q, F. 54. *my dear Gertrude*] Q, *my sweet Queen*,  
*that* F and many editors.

42. *still*] constantly; see I. i. 122. 2 *Henry VI.* I. i. 208: "look unto  
52. *fruit*] dessert. the main."

56. *the main*] the main cause, as in

His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.  
*King.* Well, we shall sift him.—

*Re-enter* POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

Welcome, my good friends !

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway ?

*Volt.* Most fair return of greetings and desires. 60

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress  
 His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd  
 To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack,  
 But, better look'd into, he truly found  
 It was against your highness ; whereat grieved 65  
 That so his sickness, age, and impotence  
 Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests  
 On Fortinbras ; which he, in brief, obeys,  
 Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,  
 Makes vow before his uncle never more 70  
 To give the assay of arms against your majesty.  
 Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,  
 Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,  
 And his commission to employ those soldiers,  
 So levied as before, against the Polack ; 75  
 With an entreaty, herein further shown,

[*Giving a paper.*

That it might please you to give quiet pass

Through your dominions for this enterprise,

57. *o'erhasty*] F, *hastie* Q. *Re-enter*] Theobald, after line 57 F ; Enter  
 Embassadors Q, after line 57. 58. *my*] Q, omitted F. 73. *three*] Q 1, F ;  
*threescore* Q. 78. *this*] Q, *that* Q 1, *his* F.

61. *first*] Caldecott : " Audience or *Macbeth*, III. i. 81 ; like French  
 opening of our business" ; Clar. Press, *maintenir*.  
 "i.e. greeting and desire."

71. *assay*] trial. But perhaps  
 67. *borne in hand*] deluded, as in *assault* ; see III. iii. 69.

On such regards of safety and allowance  
As therein are set down.

*King.* It likes us well, 80

And at our more consider'd time we'll read,  
Answer, and think upon this business.  
Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour;  
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:  
Most welcome home!

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

*Pol.* This business is well ended.— 85

My liege, and madam, to expostulate  
What majesty should be, what duty is,  
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,  
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.  
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit, 90  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,  
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:  
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,  
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?  
But let that go.

*Queen.* More matter, with less art. 95

83. *well-took*] *well-look't* Ff 2-4. 85. *well*] Q, *very well* F. 90. *since*] F,  
omitted Q. 94. *mad?*] Qq 4-6, *mad*, Q, *mad*. F.

79. *regards . . . allowance*] safe and allowable conditions. Clar. Press: "terms securing the safety of the country, and regulating the passage of the troops through it."

81. *consider'd time*] time for consideration.

86. *expostulate*] discuss, as in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, III. i. 251. Hunter quotes from *A Brief Relation of the Shipwreck of Henry May*, 1593: "How these isles came by the name

of the Bermudas . . . I will not expostulate."

90. *wit*] understanding. Staunton explains it as wisdom; Clar. Press, knowledge, as in *Merchant of Venice*, II. i. 18.

93, 94. *for . . . mad*] to attempt a definition of madness were to be mad oneself. Or does Polonius give "to be mad" as his definition of madness?

*Pol.* Madam, I swear I use no art at all.

That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity;  
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;  
But farewell it, for I will use no art.

Mad let us grant him then; and now remains 100  
That we find out the cause of this effect,  
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,  
For this effect defective comes by cause:  
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.

Perpend: 105

I have a daughter,—have, while she is mine,—  
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,  
Hath given me this; now gather and surmise. [*Reads.*

*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most  
beautified Ophelia,—* 110

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is  
a vile phrase; but you shall hear. Thus:

[*Reads.*] *In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.*

97. *he is*] F, *hee's* Q. 98. *'tis 'tis*] Q, *it is* F. 99. *farewell it*] *farewell, wit.*  
Anon.conj. 104. *thus.*] F, *thus* Q. 106. *while*] Q I, Q; *whilst* F. 108. Reads]  
Q 1676, The Letter F, omitted Q. 112, 113. *hear. Thus:* In] Malone (follow-  
ing Jennens); *heare: thus in* Q; *heare these in* F; *hear—These to Rowe; hear*  
—*These in* Capell; *hear. These. In* Knight. 113. &c.] omitted F.

96. *art*] Delius suggests that Polonius in replying to the Queen understands "art" as opposed to truth and nature.

98. *figure*] a figure in rhetoric.

105. *Perpend*] ponder, consider. Schmidt observes: "a word only used by Pistol, Polonius, and the clowns."

110. *beautified*] used by Shakespeare in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. i. 55. Theobald read *beatified*, which Capell approved as agreeing with "celestial" and "idol." Dyce takes "beautified" as meaning *beautiful* and not *accomplished*. Nash

dedicated *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*, 1594, "To the most beautified lady, the lady Elizabeth Carey"; and H. Olney dedicated R. L.'s *Diella*, 1596, "To the most worthily Honoured and vertuous beautified Ladie." Greene described Shakespeare in a vile phrase as an upstart crow "beautified with our feathers." In Henry Wotton's tale (1578), on which *Solyman and Perseda* is founded, I find: "Persida, seeing a stranger beautified in his feathers."

113. In . . . bosom] Clar. Press compares *Two Gentlemen of Verona*,

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her?

*Pol.* Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful. 115

[*Reads.*] *Doubt thou the stars are fire;*

*Doubt that the sun doth move;*

*Doubt truth to be a liar;*

*But never doubt I love.*

*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; 120*

*I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I*

*love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.*

*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this*

*machine is to him,*

HAMLET.

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me; 125

And more above, hath his solicitings,

As they fell out by time, by means, and place,

All given to mine ear.

*King.* But how hath she

Received his love?

*Pol.* What do you think of me?

116. *Reads*] Letter Q, omitted F. 125. *shown*] Q, *shew'd* F. 126. *above*] F, *about* Q; *solicitings*] Q, *soliciting* F.

III. i. 250: letters delivered "Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love." There was a pocket in the breast of a lady's dress, but there may be no reference to it here.

116-124. *Doubt*] In the first two lines and the fourth "doubt" means *be doubtful that*; in the third it means *suspect*. Hamlet's letter begins in the conventional lover's style, which perhaps was what Ophelia would expect from a courtly admirer; then there is a real outbreak of passion and self-pity; finally, in the word "machine," Hamlet indulges, after his manner, his own intellectuality, though it may baffle the reader; the letter is no more simple or homogeneous than the

writer. T. Bright, in *A Treatise of Melancholy* (1586), explains the nature of the body as that of a machine, connected with the "soul" by the intermediate "spirit." He compares (p. 66) its action to that of a clock.

121. *reckon*] Delius suggests that this may mean "to number metrically."

124. *machine is to him*] whilst this body is attached to him. See *Cymbeline*, v. v. 383, for use of "to."

126. *solicitings*] Solicit was sometimes—but perhaps not here—used of immoral proposals. Heywood, *The Wise Woman of Hogsden*, i. i.: "I'll visit my little rascall and sol-  
cite."

*King*, As of a man faithful and honourable. 130  
*Pol.* I would fain prove so. But what might you think,  
 When I had seen this hot love on the wing,—  
 As I perceived it, I must tell you that,  
 Before my daughter told me,—what might you,  
 Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think, 135  
 If I had play'd the desk or table-book,  
 Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,  
 Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;  
 What might you think? No, I went round to work,  
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak; 140  
 "Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;  
 This must not be;" and then I prescripts gave her,  
 That she should lock herself from his resort,  
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.  
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice; 145  
 And he, repulsed, a short tale to make,  
 Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,  
 Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,  
 Thence to a lightness, and by this declension

132. *this*] *his* Ff 3, 4. 137. *a winking*] F, *a working* Q. 140. *thus*] *this* Qq 4, 5. 141. *out of thy star*] Q, F; *out of your starre* Q 1; *out of thy sphere* Ff 2-4, Q 6. 142. *prescripts*] Q, *precepts* F. 143. *his*] F, *her* Q. 146. *repulsed*] F, *repell'd* Q. 149. *a*] omitted Q.

136. *desk or table-book*] silent recipient. Clar. Press explains: "If I had been the agent of their correspondence." See *tables*, I. v. 107.

137. *winking*] closed the eyes of my heart. "Wink" did not necessarily mean, as now, "a brief closure of the eyes." In *Sonnets*, xliii. 1, it is used for sleep.

139. *round*] roundly, that is plainly. See *round* in III. i. 191.

141. *out of thy star*] above thee in fortune. See *Twelfth Night*, II, v.

156: "In my stars I am above thee." Nash, in *Pierce Pennilesse*, speaks of the strict division of ranks in Denmark with reference to marriage: "It is death there for anie but a husbandman to marry a husbandman's daughter, or a gentleman's child to joyne with any but the sonne of a gentleman."

148. *watch*] a sleepless state, as in *Cymbeline*, III. iv. 43.

149. *lightness*] lightheadedness.



Into the madness wherein now he raves 150  
And all we mourn for.

*King.* Do you think 'tis this?

*Queen.* It may be, very likely.

*Pol.* Hath there been such a time, I'd fain know that,  
That I have positively said "'tis so,"  
When it proved otherwise?

*King.* Not that I know. 155

*Pol.* Take this from this, if this be otherwise.  
If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed  
Within the centre.

*King.* How may we try it further?

*Pol.* You know, sometimes he walks four hours to-  
gether 160  
Here in the lobby.

*Queen.* So he does, indeed.

*Pol.* At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him;  
Be you and I behind an arras then;

150. *wherein*] Q, *whereon* F. 151. *mourn*] Q, *wail* F and many editors.  
152. *'tis this*] F, *this* Q; *likely*] F, *like* Q. 153. *I'd*] F, *I would* Q.  
160. *four*] Hanmer, followed by other editions, reads *for*. 161. *does*] Q,  
*has* F. 163. *arras then* ;] *arras then*, Q, F; *arras*; *then* Staunton.

156. *Take this from this*] Theobald *for* is specious. But Elze (*Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, B. xi.) has shown the use by Elizabethan writers of four, forty, forty thousand to express an indefinite number. Malone cites Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*: "She will muse four hours together"; and Clar. Press, Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesie*: "laughing and gibling . . .

159. *centre*] that is, of the earth, and so, according to Ptolemaic astronomy, of the universe. Compare *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III. ii. 54.

162. *loose*] The word reminds the King and Queen that he has restrained Ophelia from communication with Hamlet.

160. *four*] Hanmer's emendation

Mark the encounter ; if he love her not,  
 And be not from his reason fall'n thereon, 165  
 Let me be no assistant for a state,  
 But keep a farm and carters.

*King.*

We will try it.

*Queen.* But look where sadly the poor wretch comes  
 reading.

*Pol.* Away, I do beseech you, both away ;

I'll board him presently.—

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*]

*Enter HAMLET [reading].*

Oh, give me leave ; 170

How does my good Lord Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Well, God-a-mercy.

*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord ?

*Ham.* Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

167. *But*] Q, And F. *Enter Hamlet*] placed after *We will try it*, line 167.  
 Q, F. 174. *Excellent*] Q, *Excellent, excellent* F.

170. *board*] accost, as in *Twelfth Night*, I. iii. 60.

170. *presently*] immediately, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. i. 95.

170. *Oh, give me leave*] addressed to Hamlet. The *Exeunt* of King and Queen is indicated in Q after line 169 ; in F as here. Capell, supposing the words to be addressed to the King and Queen, placed *Exeunt* after "leave."

174. *fishmonger*] Malone : "Fishmonger was a cant term for wencher" ; he cites B. Rich's *Irish Hubbub* : "him they call Senex fornicator and old fishmonger." Farmer and Henley's *Slang Dictionary* gives obscene meanings under "fish" and "fishmarket," which suggest that fishmonger may have meant bawd, but

I have found no example. There are Elizabethan references to the smell of fishmongers, which here could be easily indicated by an actor, as if Polonius had brought an ill air with him. Presently, however, Hamlet discourses on procreation, connecting Ophelia with his talk. Perhaps the following from Platt's *Jewell House*, 1594 (p. 97, ed. 1653), may be cited : "And some hold opinion that the females . . . do conceive only by licking of salt. And this maketh the Fishmongers' wives so wanton and beautiful." Whiter notices that in Jonson's *Masque of Christmas*, Venus, as a tire woman, says, "I am a fishmonger's daughter." Does Jonson only mean sea-born, or mean wanton and beautiful? Joubert (*Seconde*

*Pol.* Not I, my lord. 175

*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Pol.* Honest, my lord?

*Ham.* Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

*Pol.* That's very true, my lord. 180

*Ham.* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter?

*Pol.* I have, my lord.

*Ham.* Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a 185 blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive:—friend, look to 't.

*Pol.* [*Aside.*] How say you by that? Still harping

177. *lord?* F, *lord.* Q, *lord!* Dyce. 179. *man*] omitted in Ff 3, 4; *ten*] Q, two F. 182. *good kissing carrion*] Q, F; *god kissing carrion* Warburton and many editors; *god-kissing carrion* Malone. 186. *not*] F, omitted in Q. 188. [*Aside*] Capell, placed by Steevens before *Still*.

*partie des erreurs populaires*, 1600, p. 169) considers the popular opinion "que l'usage du poisson engendre beaucoup de semence." See Apuleius' curious defence against the charge that he had made a magical use of fish in his courtship of a widow.

176. *honest*] Ben Jonson's "Town gull," Master Mathew (*Every Man in his Humour*, I. iii.) is a citizen's son: "His father's an honest man, a worshipful fishmonger, and so forth."

181–183. *For . . . daughter*] Retaining the *good* of Q, F, *good kissing* (which might be hyphenated) must be explained, with Caldecott, Corson, Furness, *good for kissing*. But much might be said on behalf of Warburton's emendation, which Johnson accepted with an outbreak of admiration—*god kissing*; compare "common-kissing Titan," *Cymbeline*, III. iv. 166, and see *1 Henry IV.* II. iv. 133. In *King*

*Edward III.* (1596) we have: "The freshest summer's day doth soonest taint The loathed carrion that it seems to kiss." In support of *god-kissing* Malone cites *Lear*, II. i. 9: "ear-kissing arguments." Hamlet ironically justifies the severance by Polonius of Ophelia from himself: all the world is evil, even the sun has the basest propensities; if a dead dog is corrupted by the sun, how much more your daughter by me. Staunton supposes that Hamlet reads, or pretends to read, these words. See a parallel from St. Augustine quoted by Ingleby, *Shakespeare Hermeneutics*, p. 159.

185. *conception*] Steevens supposed that there is a quibble, as in *Lear*, I. i. 12, between "conception," *understanding*, and "conceive," *to be pregnant*.

188. *by*] concerning, as in *Merchant of Venice*, I. ii. 58.

on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first;  
 he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone, far 190  
 gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much  
 extremity for love; very near this. I'll  
 speak to him again.—What do you read,  
 my lord?

*Ham.* Words, words, words.

195

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord?

*Ham.* Between who?

*Pol.* I mean the matter that you read, my lord.

*Ham.* Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here  
 that old men have grey beards, that their faces 200  
 are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber  
 and plum-tree gum, and that they have a  
 plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak  
 hams; all which, sir, though I most powerfully  
 and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty 205  
 to have it thus set down; for you yourself, sir,  
 should be old as I am, if like a crab you could  
 go backward.

*Pol.* [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is  
 method in't.—Will you walk out of the air, 210  
 my lord?

*Ham.* Into my grave?

190, 191. *far gone, far gone*] F, *farre gone* Q. 197. *who*] Q, F; *whom* F1  
 2-4. 198. *that you read*] Q, *you meane* F. 199. *rogue*] Q, *slave* F.  
 202. *and*] Q, or F. 203. *most*] Q, omitted F. 206. *you yourself*] F,  
*vour selfe* Q. 207. *should be old*] F, *shall grow old* Q. 209. *Aside*  
 Johnson. 212. *grave?*] F, *grave*. Q.

197. *Between who?*] Clar. Press: 199. *the satirical rogue*] War-  
 "Hamlet purposely misunderstands burton refers to Juvenal, *Sat.* x. 188.  
 the word to mean 'cause of dispute,' 210-213.] Several editors prefer  
 as in *Twelfth Night*, III. iv. 172." the Q *grave*. Compare Jonson's

*Pol.* Indeed, that is out o' the air. [*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason 215 and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. 220

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools! 225

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Pol.* You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

*Ros.* [*To Polonius.*] God save you, sir!

[*Exit Polonius.*]

*Guil.* My honoured lord!

*Ros.* My most dear lord!

*Ham.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou, 230 Guildenstern?—Ah, Rosencrantz? Good lads, how do ye both?

213. *that is out o' the*] F, *that's out of the* Q; *Aside*] Capell.  
216. *sanity*] F, *sanctity* Q. 217, 218. *and suddenly . . . him*] F, omitted in Q. 219, 220. *My . . . humbly*] F, *My lord, I will* Q.  
221. *sir*] F, omitted in Q. 222 *will*] F, *will not* Q; *except my life*] three times as here, in Q; *except my life, my life.* F. Marked *aside* by White, Hudson. 226. *the Lord*] Q, *my Lord* F. 227. *To Polonius*] Malone.  
228. *My*] Q, *Mine* F. 231. *Ah,*] Q, *Oh,* F. 232. *ye*] F, *you* Q.

*Every Man in His Humour*, II. i.: curious parallel is found in Jonson's "Dame Kitely: For love's sake, Folio 1616, and in the Quarto 1601. sweetheart, come in out of the Shakespeare acted in Jonson's play; air. *Kitely*: How simple, and how perhaps this is an echo that lived in subtle are her answers!" This his brain.

*Ros.* As the indifferent children of the earth.

*Guil.* Happy in that we are not over-happy ;

On Fortune's cap we are not the very button. 235

*Ham.* Nor the soles of her shoe?

*Ros.* Neither, my lord.

*Ham.* Then you live about her waist, or in the  
middle of her favours?

*Guil.* Faith, her privates we. 240

*Ham.* In the secret parts of Fortune? Oh, most  
true; she is a strumpet. What's the news?

*Ros.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown  
honest.

*Ham.* Then is doomsday near; but your news is 245  
not true. Let me question more in particular:  
what have you, my good friends, deserved at  
the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to  
prison hither?

*Guil.* Prison, my lord? 250

*Ham.* Denmark's a prison.

*Ros.* Then is the world one.

*Ham.* A goodly one; in which there are many  
confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being  
one o' the worst. 255

*Ros.* We think not so, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is

234, 235. *over-happy*; *On Fortune's cap we*] *F*, *ever happy on Fortune's lap*, *We* *Q*. 239. *favours*?] *Q*, *favour*? *F*. 242. *What's the*] *F*, *What* *Q*. 243. *that*] *F*, omitted *Q*. 246-278. *Let me . . . attended*] *F*, omitted in *Q*.

233. *indifferent*] average, as in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, III. ii. 44.

241. *In . . . Fortune*] Does Hamlet already suspect them, and hint that

they are seeking fortune by dishonourable means?

254. *confines*] places of confinement.



nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so; to me it is a prison.

*Ros.* Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis 260  
too narrow for your mind.

*Ham.* O God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell,  
and count myself a king of infinite space, were  
it not that I have bad dreams.

*Guil.* Which dreams indeed are ambition; for the 265  
very substance of the ambitious is merely the  
shadow of a dream.

*Ham.* A dream itself is but a shadow.

*Ros.* Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light  
a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow. 270

*Ham.* Then are our beggars bodies, and our  
monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars'  
shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my  
fay, I cannot reason.

*Ros., Guil.* We'll wait upon you. 275

*Ham.* No such matter; I will not sort you with the  
rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like  
an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.

264. *bad dreams*] Malone—perhaps by a printer's error—read “had dreams,” a “noble emendation,” as Johnson might have called it, attained probably by accident.

271. *beggars bodies*] The monarch or hero is an outstretched shadow; a shadow is thrown by a body; body is the opposite of shadow; therefore the opposite of monarch, and heroes, namely, beggars, are bodies. Whether at one or two removes—shadow, or shadow's shadow—it is a beggar who produces an ambitious monarch. Hamlet's private meaning may possibly be that his uncle is a shadow

—a mockery king—with a beggar for its substance. He purposely loses himself in his riddles, and, being incapable of reasoning, will to the court, where just thinking is out of place.

274. *fay*] faith.

278. *dreadfully attended*] Hamlet speaks like an honest man, but knows his meaning will not be understood; he *is* dreadfully attended, by Memory and Horror, and wronged Love, and the duty of Revenge. Let the courtiers suppose he has a madman's suspicions of dangerous followers.

But, in the beaten way of friendship, what  
make you at Elsinore? 280

*Ros.* To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks;  
but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my  
thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you  
not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is 285  
it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with  
me; come, come; nay, speak.

*Guil.* What should we say, my lord?

*Ham.* Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You  
were sent for; and there is a kind of confession 290  
in your looks, which your modesties have not  
craft enough to colour: I know the good king  
and queen have sent for you.

*Ros.* To what end, my lord?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me con- 295  
jure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by  
the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation  
of our ever-preserved love, and by what more  
dear a better proposer could charge you withal,  
be even and direct with me, whether you were 300  
sent for, or no.

*Ros.* [*Aside to Guildenstern.*] What say you?

282. *even*] F, *ever* Q. 286. *Come*] F, *come, come*, Q. 289. *Why*] omitted in Q; *any thing, but*] Q 6, *any thing but* Q, *any thing*. But F. 290. *of*] Q, omitted in F. 299. *could*] F, *can* Q. 302. *Aside to Guildenstern*] Globe ed.; To Guilden. Theobald; To Hamlet Delius conject.

280 *make*] do, as in I. ii. 164.

284. *a halfpenny*] at a halfpenny.

289. *but*] only. Clarke thinks it also includes the effect of "except"

—a covert sarcasm.

299. *proposer*] speaker. So "Proposing," speaking, in *Much Ado*, III. i. 3.

300. *even*] plain, honest.

*Ham.* [*Aside.*] Nay, then I have an eye of you.—  
If you love me, hold not off.

*Guil.* My lord, we were sent for. 305

*Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation  
prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to  
the king and queen moult no feather. I have  
of late,—but wherefore I know not,—lost all  
my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and 310  
indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition  
that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me  
a sterile promontory; this most excellent  
canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'er-  
hanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted 315  
with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing  
to me than a foul and pestilent congregation  
of vapours. What a piece of work is a man!  
how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty!

303. *Aside*] Steevens. 307. *discovery, and*] Q, *discovery of* F, with  
colon after *queen*, line 308. 310. *exercises*] Q, *exercise* F. 311. *heavily*]  
Q, *heavenly* F. 314, 315. *o'erhanging*] *ore-hanged* Qq 4-6. 315.  
*firmament*] Q, omitted in F. 316. *appears*] F, *appeareth* Q, *appeared*  
Ff 2-4. 316, 317. *no . . . than*] F, *nothing to me but* Q. 318. *a piece*]  
F, *peece* Q; *a man*] man Q 6, Dyce (ed. 2), Furness. 319. *faculty*] F,  
*faculties* Q. 319-322. Q points with commas after *faculties*, *moving*,  
*action*, *apprehension*, and colon after *God*.

303. *of you*] on you. So "of" for  
"on" in II. ii. 27.

307. *prevent your discovery*] anti-  
cipate your disclosure.

310. *custom of exercises*] In T.  
Bright's *A Treatise of Melancholy*  
(1586), p. 126, occur the words  
"custom of exercise." It is a passage  
in which Bright describes melancholy  
men as sometimes very witty; as  
"exact and curious in pondering the  
very moments of things"; as de-  
liberating long "because of doubt and  
distrust"; and as troubled with fear-

ful dreams. I can hardly doubt that  
Shakespeare was acquainted with  
Bright's Treatise.

315. *fretted*] Clar. Press compares  
*Cymbeline*, II. iv. 88:

"The roof o' the chamber  
With golden cherubins is fretted."  
Fret is an architectural term, used  
here loosely for emboss, or adorn.

318. *a man*] Dyce (ed. 2) thinks  
"a" in Qq. 2-5 was shuffled out of  
its place before *piece*, and that Ff,  
instead of transposing "a," added  
another before *piece*.

in form and moving how express and admir- 320  
able! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though 325  
by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh then, when I said "man delights not me"? 330

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you; we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service. 335

*Ham.* He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall 340

325. *no*] omitted in Q; *woman*] F, *women* Q. 329. *you*] F, *yee* Q; *then*] Q, omitted in F. 337. *of me*] F, *on me* Q. 340-342. *the clown . . . sere*] omitted in Q.

320. *express*] exact. Clar. Press quote Hebrews i. 3: "express image." Schmidt, "expressive."

325, 326.] to follow such a confession with laughter, from any cause, is a measure of the courtiers' intelligent sympathy.

332. *lenten*] meagre, as in *Twelfth Night*, I. v. 9.

333. *coted*] overtook and passed beyond. Golding's *Ovid Met.* B. x.: "With that Hippomenes coted her"

(Lat. *præterit*); used specially as a term in coursing, and so explained by Turbervile.

339. *humorous man*] "Not the funny man or jester . . . but the actor who personated the fantastic characters . . . for the most part represented as capricious and quarrelsome" (Staunton). "Such characters as Faulconbridge, Jaques, and Mercutio" (Delius). The characters of the stock company suit the present play

make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they?

*Ros.* Even those you were wont to take such delight 345  
in, the tragedians of the city.

*Ham.* How chances it they travel? their residence,  
both in reputation and profit, was better both  
ways.

*Ros.* I think their inhibition comes by the means of 350  
the late innovation.

*Ham.* Do they hold the same estimation they did  
when I was in the city? are they so followed?

*Ros.* No, indeed, they are not.

*Ham.* How comes it? do they grow rusty? 355

*Ros.* Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted  
pace; but there is, sir, an eyrie of children,

341. *tickle*] Staunton conject., *Clar. Press, tickled F.* 343. *blank*] *F,*  
*black Q.* 345. *such*] *Q,* omitted in *F.* 354. *they are*] *F,* *are they Q.*  
355-383. *How . . . load too*] omitted in *Q.*

—King Claudius, who receives such tribute as he deserves from Hamlet; Laertes, the fencer; Hamlet, the lover, who sighs gratis; Polonius, who ends his part as "most secret and most grave"; the grave-digger; and Ophelia, who speaks her mind in madness somewhat too freely. See App. III.

341, 342. *tickle o' the sere*] Explained first by Nicholson, and independently by *Clar. Press*: *sere*, the bar or balance-lever of a gun-lock (from "serre," a talon), a stop-catch; if "tickle," ticklish, loose, unsteady, the gun goes off at a touch; lungs tickle o' the sere, lungs that move to laughter at a touch.

342. *lady*] Hamlet is ironical; the lady, of course, will have indecent

words to utter; if she omits them, the halting blank verse will betray her delicacy.

347. *residence*] *i.e.* in the city.

350, 351.] See Appendix, p. 229.

357, 358. *eyrie of children, little eyases*] eyrie or aerie, brood of nestlings; eyases, unfledged hawks. "Cry out" carries on the metaphor. In *The Gentleman's Recreation*, Part II. p. 21 (ed. 1686), we find "the name *Eyess* lasts as long as she is in the Eyrie. These are very troublesome in their feeding, *do cry very much.*" Middleton, in *Father Hubbard's Tales*, 1604, speaks of "a nest of boys" at the Blackfriars "able to ravish a man" (noted by Prof. Hales).



little eyases, that cry out on the top of question and are most tyrannically clapped for't; these are now the fashion, and so berattle the 360 common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

*Ham.* What, are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted? Will they pursue the 365 quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players,—as it is most like if their means are no better,—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against 370 their own succession?

*Ros.* 'Faith, there has been much to-do on both sides, and the nation holds it no sin to tarre

360. *berattle*] F 2, *be-rattled* F. 368, 369. *most like*] Pope, *like most* F. 369. *no*] *not* F 2.

358. *cry . . . question*] clamour forth the height of controversy, utter shrilly the extreme matter of debate. "Cry out" may be regarded as a verb; to "cry on" is frequent in Shakespeare; "cry out on" may be a combination of the two; "question" is a matter in dispute; the "top of question" is the matter in dispute pushed to extremity. Other explanations have been proposed. *Clar. Press*: "Probably, to speak in a high key, dominating conversation." For "question" in this sense, see *Merchant of Venice*, iv. i. 70. In *Armin's Nest of Ninnies*, p. 55 (Sh. Soc. reprint) occurs: "Cry it up in the top of question." *Prof. Hales* notes from *Adam Bede*: "Mrs. Poyser keeps at the top o' the talk like a fife."

359. *tyrannically*] outrageously;

probably alluding to what Bottom calls "a tyrant's vein," or "a part to make all split" (*Rolfe*).

361. *common stages*] the public, as distinguished from the private, theatres.

362. *rapiers*] fashionable gallants are afraid to visit the "common" theatres, so unfashionable have the writers for the children made them.

365. *escoted*] paid. *Dyce* quotes *Cotgrave*, "*Escotter*, Every one to pay his shot."

366. *quality*] profession, and specially of players; so *Massinger*, *The Picture*, ii. i.:

"How do you like the quality?

You had a foolish itch to be an actor."

373. *tarre*] set on to fight, used specially of dogs, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, i. iii. 392.



them to controversy; there was, for a while,  
no money bid for argument, unless the poet 375  
and the player went to cuffs in the ques-  
tion.

*Ham.* Is't possible?

*Guil.* Oh, there has been much throwing about of  
brains. 380

*Ham.* Do the boys carry it away?

*Ros.* Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his  
load too.

*Ham.* It is not very strange; for my uncle is King  
of Denmark, and those, that would make 385  
mows at him while my father lived, give  
twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece,  
for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is some-  
thing in this more than natural, if philosophy  
could find it out. 390

*[Flourish of trumpets within.]*

*Guil.* There are the players.

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore.  
Your hands, come; the appurtenance of wel-  
come is fashion and ceremony: let me comply

384. *my*] Q, *mine* F. 386. *mows*] F, *mouhs* Q. 387. *fifty*] Q,  
omitted F; *an*] F, *a* Q. 388. *'Sblood*] Q, omitted F. 393. *hands*,  
*come* ;] F; *hands come then*, Qq 2, 3; *hands, come then* Qq 4, 5; *hands: come*  
*then*, Q 6.

375. *argument*] plot of a play, as in  
III. ii. 244.

376, 377. *question*] Perhaps means  
dialogue; perhaps controversy, de-  
bate; the poet for the children attacks  
the common players.

381. *carry it away*] win the day.

382. *Hercules*] An allusion to the  
Globe Theatre, the sign of which was  
Hercules carrying the globe.

386. *mows*] grimaces, Fr. *moue*.

388. *picture in little*] miniature.  
The children—miniature actors—now  
carry away Hercules; so too have  
fashions changed with respect to  
kings.

393. *appurtenance*] adjuncts.

394. *comply*] observe the formalities  
of courtesy, as in v. ii. 192; *garb*,  
fashion.

with you in this garb, lest my extent to the 395  
 players, which, I tell you, must show fairly  
 outwards, should more appear like entertain-  
 ment than yours. You are welcome; but my  
 uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord? 400

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west; when the  
 wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a  
 handsaw.

*Re-enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen!

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—at 405  
 each ear a hearer: that great baby you see  
 there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

395. *this*] Q, *the* F; *lest my*] F, Q 6; *let me* Qq 2, 3; *let my* Qq 4, 5.  
 397. *outwards*] Q, *outward* F. 406, 407. *you see there is*] *as you see is* Qq  
 4-6. 407. *swaddling*] Q, *swathing* F.

395. *extent*] behaviour, deportment,  
 as in *Twelfth Night*, IV. i. 57. Collier  
 proposed ostent.

401-403. *I am . . . handsaw*] I  
 am mad only in one point of the  
 compass. T. Bright, in *A Treatise of*  
*Melancholy* (1586), mentions the  
 south and south-east winds as the  
 most suitable for sufferers from melan-  
 choly (chap. xxxix.). Burton gives  
 other opinions. A southerly wind  
 would, according to Bright, favour  
 Hamlet's sanity. North and north-  
 west, we may infer, would be the most  
 unfavourable. The word *hawk* was  
 and is used for a plasterer's tool, but no  
 example has been found earlier than  
 1700. *Hack*, however, is an Eliza-  
 bethan name for a tool for breaking  
 or chopping up, and for agricultural  
 tools of the mattock, hoe, and pick-  
 axe type (*New Eng. Dict.*). *Hand-*  
*saw* might suggest *hack*, for we  
 find in *1 Henry IV.* II. iv. 187, "My  
 sword hackt like a hand-saw." It is,

however, generally assumed that  
 "handsaw" here is a corruption of  
*heronshaw* or *hernsew*; "no other  
 instances of the phrase (except as  
 quotations from Shakespeare) have  
 been found" (*New Eng. Dict.*). J. C.  
 Heath (quoted in *Clar. Press*) ex-  
 plains: the heron flying down the  
 north wind is ill seen, the spectator  
 looking south towards the sun; flying  
 north, on a south wind, it can be  
 easily distinguished from the hawk.  
 Does Hamlet imagine the two courtiers  
 as hawks loosed to pursue him? Else-  
 where he compares them to hunters  
 driving him unto the toils. *The*  
*Gentleman's Recreation* gives direc-  
 tions for the pursuit of a hern by a  
 pair of hawks. The south wind is  
 generally represented by Shakespeare  
 as a wind of evil contagion. Does  
 Hamlet mean that he can recognise  
 the King's birds of chase flying on an  
 ill wind? See App. III.

*Ros.* Happily he's the second time come to them;  
for, they say, an old man is twice a  
child.

410

*Ham.* I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the  
players; mark it.—You say right, sir; o'  
Monday morning; 'twas so, indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you. When 415  
Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Ham.* Buz, buz!

*Pol.* Upon my honour—

*Ham.* Then came each actor on his ass,— 420

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy,  
comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical,  
historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-  
comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable,  
or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too 425

408. *he's*] F, *he is* Q. 411. *prophesy* *he*] *prophecy*, *he* Qq 2, 3, *prophecy*  
*that he* Qq 4-6, *Prophesie*. *Hee* F, *Prophesie*, *He* Ff 2-4. 412. *o'*] Capell,  
*a* Q, *for a* F. 413. *morning*;) *morning*, Qq 2, 3, *morning* Qq 4-6, F; *so*]  
Q 1, F; *then* Q. 416. *was*] omitted in F. 419. *my*] Q, *mine* F;  
*honour*—] Rowe; *honour*. Q, F. 420. *came*] Q, *can* F. 422, 423. *pas-*  
*toral-comical*, *historical-pastoral*,] *Pastoricall-Comicall-Historicall-Pastorall*  
F, Q omits the classes of drama which follow *historical-pastoral*.

408. *Happily*] Haply, as in i. i. 134.  
412. *You say*] Hamlet would mis-  
lead Polonius as to the subject of their  
conversation.

418. *Buz*] Blackstone says, "It was  
an interjection used at Oxford when  
anyone began a story that was gener-  
ally known before." Schmidt: "An  
interjection to command silence."

420. *Then . . . ass*] Johnson: "This  
seems to be the line of a ballad."  
Elze supposes that Hamlet makes  
"on his ass" equivalent to Polonius's  
"upon my honour."

424. *scene individable*] a play which  
observes unity of place; "poem un-  
limited," a play which disregards the  
unities.

425, 426. *Seneca . . . Plautus*]  
Seneca's tragedies had been trans-  
lated by Newton and others, and  
influenced the English drama. See  
Cunliffe, *The Influence of Seneca on*  
*Elizabethan Tragedy* (1893). Shake-  
speare's *Comedy of Errors* is founded on  
Warner's translation of the *Menechmi*  
of Plautus.

heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

*Ham.* O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord? 430

*Ham.* Why,

*One fair daughter, and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.*

*Pol.* [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah? 435

*Pol.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows then, my lord?

*Ham.* Why, 440

*As by lot, God wot,  
and then, you know,  
It came to pass, as most like it was,—*

426, 427. *light.* For . . . *liberty, these*] Theobald, *light for . . . liberty: these Q, light, for . . . Liberty.* These F. 430. *What a treasure*] *What treasure* S. Walker, conject. Dyce (ed. 2). 434. *Aside*] Capell. 436-438. *If . . . not*] omitted in Qq 4-6.

426, 427. *law of writ and the liberty*] Capell: "This means pieces written in rule and pieces out of rule." Corson suggests that Seneca exemplified the law and Plautus the liberty of writing. Probably, however, the reference is to written plays and extemporised parts. In Middleton's *The Spanish Gipsy*, the gipsy-actors can perform in "a way which the Italians and the Frenchmen use":

"That is, on a word given, or some slight plot,  
The actors will extempore fashion out  
Scenes neat and witty."

Rowe and other editors read "law of wit."

428. *Jephthah*] Steevens communicated the "pious chanson" to Percy; a reprint from a blackletter copy will be found in Child's *English and Scottish Ballads*. Hamlet quotes from the first stanza. Jephthah sacrificed his daughter; before her death she went into the wilderness to bewail her virginity. So with Ophelia. In lines 444, 445 Hamlet says "the first row of the pious chanson will show you more,"—perhaps he refers to the line "Great wars there should be."

the first row of the pious chanson will show  
you more; for look where my abridgement 445  
comes.

*Enter four or five Players.*

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I  
am glad to see thee well: welcome, good friends.  
—O, my old friend! Why, thy face is  
valanced since I saw thee last; comest thou 450  
to beard me in Denmark?—What, my young  
lady and mistress! By'r lady, your ladyship  
is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last,  
by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your  
voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not 455  
cracked within the ring.—Masters, you are all

444. *pious chanson*] Qq 2-5; *Pons Chanson* F; *Pans Chanson* Ff 2-4, Q 6;  
*godly Ballet* Q 1. 445, 446. *abridgement comes*] Q 1, Q; *abridgements*  
*come* F. 447. *You are*] Q, *Y'are* F. 448. *thee*] Q, F; *ye* Dyce (ed. 2).  
449. *my*] F, omitted Q; *Why, thy*] Q, *Thy* F. 450. *valanced*] Q, *valiant*  
F. 452. *By'r lady*] F, Q 1; *by lady* Qq 2-4; *my Lady* Qq 5, 6; *ladyship*  
*Lordship* Ff 3, 4. 453. *to heaven*] Q, *heaven* F.

444. *pious chanson*] The "godly  
Ballet" of Q 1 confirms the reading  
of Q. Attempts have been made by  
reference to the French "*Chanson du*  
*Pont Neuf*" to justify the Folio mis-  
print. The ballad is "pious" as  
having a scriptural subject. "Row"  
perhaps means stanza, or perhaps  
column of a broadside ballad.

445. *abridgement*] See *Midsummer*  
*Night's Dream*, v. i. 39, where *abridge-*  
*ment* means an entertainment, which  
shortens the time. Here it has both  
this meaning and that of cutting short  
the talk.

450. *valanced*] fringed (with a  
beard).

454. *chopine*] Italian *ciopino*.  
Minsheu defines Spanish *chapin* "a

high cork shoe. Coryat in *Crudities*,  
1611, describes the Venetian "chapi-  
neys" as worn by ladies under the  
shoes, sometimes half a yard high.  
The boy who plays the lady has grown  
since Hamlet saw him last. See  
App. III.

456. *cracked within the ring*]  
coins cracked within the circle which  
surrounded the sovereign's head  
were unfit for currency. Usurers,  
Lodge tells us in *Wits Miserie*, 1596,  
bought up "crackt angels" at nine  
shillings a piece. Is there a play  
on "ring"—a voice that rings clear  
and true? In Beaumont's *Remedy*  
*of Love* (xi. 477, Dyce) we find the  
same expression: "If her voice be  
bad, crack'd in the ring."



welcome. We 'll e'en to 't like French falconers,  
fly at any thing we see: we 'll have a speech  
straight; come, give us a taste of your quality;  
come, a passionate speech. 460

*First Play.* What speech, my good lord?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech once, but  
it was never acted; or, if it was, not above  
once; for the play, I remember, pleased not  
the million; 'twas caviare to the general; but 465  
it was,—as I received it, and others, whose  
judgments in such matters cried in the top  
of mine,—an excellent play, well digested in  
the scenes, set down with as much modesty  
as cunning. I remember, one said there were 470  
no sallets in the lines to make the matter  
savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that  
might indict the author of affection; but called  
it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet,  
and by very much more handsome than fine. 475

457. *French*] Q 1, F; *friendly* Q. 461. *good*] Q 1, Q; omitted in F.  
467. *judgments*] Q, *judgement* F. 470. *were*] Q; *was* Q 1, F. 473. *in-*  
*dict*] Collier; *indite* Q, F; *affection* Q, *affectation* F. 474, 475. *as whole-*  
*some . . . fine*] Q, omitted in F.

457. *French falconers*] "It was the  
fashion of our ancestors to sneer at  
the French as falconers. They did  
not regard the rigour of the game,  
but condescended to any quarry that  
came in their way" (D. H. Madden,  
*The Diary of Master William Silence*,  
p. 146).

459. *quality*] see line 366.

465. *caviare*] The spelling of Q 1  
"caviary" and of F 1 "caviarie"  
indicates the pronunciation here.

465. *the general*] the multitude.  
Malone notes that Lord Clarendon  
uses the word in this sense.

467, 468. *cried in the top of mine*]  
sounded with authority above mine.  
Perhaps a metaphor from a dog's  
"over-topping" (baying more loudly  
than the rest of the cry).

471. *sallets*] salads, containing  
savoury herbs; here, spicy impro-  
prieties. Pope read *salts* (ed. 1) and  
*salt* (ed. 2).

473. *affection*] means the same as  
*Affectation*. *Love's Labour's Lost*, v.  
i. 4: "witty without affection."

475. *more handsome than fine*] more  
becoming and graceful than showy.



One speech in it I chiefly loved ; 'twas Æneas'  
tale to Dido ; and thereabout of it especially,  
where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it  
live in your memory, begin at this line : let  
me see, let me see ;—

480

*The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast,—*  
'tis not so ; it begins with Pyrrhus :—

*The rugged Pyrrhus,—he whose sable arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble*

*When he lay couched in the ominous horse,—* 485

*Hath now this dread and black complexion  
smear'd*

*With heraldry more dismal ; head to foot*

*Now is he total gules ; horribly trick'd*

*With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,*

*Baked and impasted with the parching streets,* 490

*That lend a tyrannous and a damned light*

*To their lords' murder ; roasted in wrath and fire,*

*And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,*

476. *speech*] Q, *cheefe speech* F. 477. *tale*] Q 1, F ; *talke* Q. 478. *where*] Q 1, F ; *when* Q. 482. *'tis not so ;*] Qq 2, 3 (later Qq omit *so*) ; *It is not so* : F. 486. *this*] his Q 1, Q 6. 487. *dismal ; head to foot*] F, *dismall head to foote*, Q. 491. *and a*] Q, and F. 492. *their lords' murder*] Capell, *their Lords murther* Q, *their vilde murthers* F, *their lord's murder* Steevens.

481. *The rugged Pyrrhus*] This tale of Æneas to Dido is made to stand out from the general movement of the play by being written in the tragic style of Shakespeare's early contemporaries. *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, says Fleay, was written by Marlowe and Nash. The narrative of Priam's death he ascribed to Nash (and afterwards to Marlowe). He supposed that this scene was written by Shakespeare in 1594, in competition with the scene in *Dido*, and was introduced

about 1601 into the first draught of *Hamlet*. This is conjecture ; what is certain is that Shakespeare reproduces, without any intention of burlesque, a style which he had left far behind him.

481. *Hyrcanian beast*] the tiger ; see *Macbeth*, III. iv. 101.

488. *gules*] heraldic for red, as in *Timon of Athens*, IV. iii. 59. "Trick'd" may also be the heraldic term, meaning to describe in drawing.

*With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus  
Old grandsire Priam seeks.*

495

So, proceed you.

*Pol.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good  
accent and good discretion.

First Play.

*Anon he finds him*

*Striking too short at Greeks ; his antique sword, 500*

*Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,*

*Repugnant to command ; unequal match'd,*

*Pyrrhus at Priam drives ; in rage strikes wide ;*

*But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword*

*The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium, 505*

*Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top*

*Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash*

*Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear ; for, lo ! his sword,*

*Which was declining on the milky head*

*Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick ; 510*

*So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,*

*And like a neutral to his will and matter,*

*Did nothing.*

*But, as we often see, against some storm,*

*A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still, 515*

*The bold winds speechless and the orb below*

496. *So, proceed you*] Q, omitted F. 502. *match'd*] Q, *match* F.  
505. *Then senseless Ilium*] F, omitted Q. 506. *this*] Q, *his* F. 512. *And*  
*like*] F, *Like* Q.

504, 505. *But . . . falls*] Compare  
*Dido, Queen of Carthage* :

"Which he disdain'd whisk his  
sword about,

And with the wind thereof the  
king fell down."

511. *painted tyrant*] Compare *Mac-*  
*beth*, v. viii. 25-27.

512. *a neutral*] one indifferent to  
his purpose and its object.

515. *rack*] Dyce (*Gloss.*) : "a mass  
of vapoury clouds." "The winds in  
the upper region, which move the  
clouds above (which we call the  
*rack*)" (Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum*, ii. §  
115).

*As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder  
Doth rend the region ; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,  
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work ;  
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall 520  
On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne,  
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword  
Now falls on Priam.  
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune ! All you gods,  
In general synod take away her power ; 525  
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,  
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven  
As low as to the fiends !*

*Pol.* This is too long.

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's, with your beard.— 530  
Prithee, say on ; he's for a jig or a tale of  
bawdry, or he sleeps : say on ; come to  
Hecuba.

First Play. *But who, O, who had seen the mobled  
queen— 535*

*Ham.* "The mobled queen?"

*Pol.* That's good ; "mobled queen" is good.

519. Aroused] Collier ; A rowsed Q, F. 521. Mars's armour] Capell,  
Marses Armor Q, Mars his Armours F. 524. strumpet, Fortune] hyphened  
in F. 534. who, O, who] F, who, a woe Q, who, ah woe Q 6. 534,  
536. mobled] Q, Ff 2-4 ; inobled F ; ennobl'd Capell. 536. queen?] F,  
Queene. Q. 537. mobled . . . good] omitted in Q.

518. region] Clar. Press : "Originally a division of the sky marked out by the Roman augurs. In later times the atmosphere was divided into three regions—upper, middle, and lower." Used by Shakespeare for the space of air, as in *Romeo and Juliet*, II. ii. 21.

531. jig] a ludicrous metrical composition, sometimes given on stages by the clown, sometimes, as Cotgrave

says, "at the end of an Enterlude, wherein some pretie Knaverie is acted."

534. mobled] muffled. Warburton quotes from Sandys' *Travels* : "Their [Turkish women's] heads and faces are so mabled in fine linen." Farmer quotes Shirley, *Gentleman of Venice* : "The moon does mobble up herself."

First Play. *Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames*

*With bisson rheum ; a clout upon that head  
Where late the diadem stood ; and for a robe, 540  
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,  
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up ;  
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,  
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pro-  
nounced :*

*But if the gods themselves did see her then, 545  
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,  
The instant burst of clamour that she made,—  
Unless things mortal move them not at all,—  
Would have made milch the burning eyes of  
heaven 550  
And passion in the gods.*

*Pol.* Look, whether he has not turned his colour  
and has tears in's eyes. Prithee, no more.

*Ham.* 'Tis well ; I'll have thee speak out the rest  
of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the 555  
players well bestowed ? Do you hear, let  
them be well used, for they are the abstracts  
and brief chronicles of the time ; after your

538. flames] Q, flame F. 539. upon] Q, about F. 551. passion in] passionate Hamner, passionate Collier MS. 553. Prithee] Q, Pray you F.  
555. of this] Q, omitted F. 556. bestowed?] Theobald, bestowed ; Q, bestow'd. F ; you hear] Q, ye heare F. 557. abstracts] F, abstract Q.

539. bisson] blinding. More commonly "blind" or "purblind," as in *Coriolanus*, II. i. 70.

544. state] perhaps, as often, power, majesty ; but possibly seat or chair of dignity, as in *Macbeth*, III. iv. 5.

550. milch] moist, as in Drayton

*Polyolbion*, xiii. 171, "exhaling the milch dew."

551] Marston, in *The Insatiate Countess*, I. i., refers to "a player's passion" weeping for "old Priam"—evidently pointing to this scene.

death you were better have a bad epitaph than  
their ill report while you live. 560

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to their  
desert.

*Ham.* God's bodykins, man, much better! Use  
every man after his desert, and who should  
'scape whipping? Use them after your own 565  
honour and dignity; the less they deserve,  
the more merit is in your bounty. Take  
them in.

*Pol.* Come, sirs.

*Ham.* Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to- 570  
morrow.

[*Exit Polonius, with all the Players, but  
the First.*

Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play  
*The Murder of Gonzago?*

*First Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, 575  
for a need, study a speech of some dozen or  
sixteen lines, which I would set down and  
insert in't, could you not?

*First Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Very well. Follow that lord; and look you 580  
mock him not.

[*Exit First Player.*

560. *live*] Q, *lived* F. 563. *bodykins*] F, *bodkin* Q; *much*] Q, *farre* Q 1,  
omitted F. 564. *shoul'd*] F, *shall* Q. Exit, &c.] Dyce, Exit Polon. F  
after line 569; Exeunt Pol. and Players Q after "Elsinore," line 583.  
576. *for a need*] Q 1, F; *for need* Q; *dozen*] Q 1, F; *dosen lines* Q.  
578. *in't,*] Q, *in't?* F; *you*] Q, *ye* F. Exit First Player] Dyce, omitted Q, F.

563. *bodykins*] dear body—diminu-  
tive of endearment.

576, 577. *dozen or sixteen lines*]  
See III. ii. 200 (note).

—My good friends, I'll leave you till night;  
you are welcome to Elsinore.

*Ros.* Good my lord!

*Ham.* Ay, so, God be wi' ye!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

—Now I am alone. 585

Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit

That from her working all his visage wann'd; 590

Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!

For Hecuba?

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, 595

That he should weep for her? What would  
he do

Had he the motive and the cue for passion

That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,

Make mad the guilty and appal the free, 600

585. *God be wi' ye*] *God buy to you* Q, *God buy 'ye* F. *Exeunt . . .*]  
*Globe Sh.*; *Exeunt* after line 584 Q, F. 589. *own*] Q, *whole* F. 590. *his*  
*visage*] F, *the visage* Q; *wann'd*] *wand* Q, *warm'd* F. 591. *in's*] F, *in*  
*his* Q. 593. *nothing!*] Capell, *nothing*, Q, *nothing?* F. 594. *Hecuba?*]  
F, *Hecuba*. Q, *Hecuba!* Capell. 595. *to Hecuba*] Q 1, F; *to her* Q.  
597. *the cue for*] F, *that for* Q.

586. *peasant slave*] Furness: "It is shown by Furnivall in *Notes and Queries*, 12th April and 3rd May 1873, that it was possible for Shakespeare to have seen in the flesh some of the bondmen or 'peasant slaves' of England."

592. *function*] operation of the faculties, as in *Macbeth*, I. iii. 140; *conceit*, conception.

600. *free*] innocent, as in III. ii. 254.



Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed  
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,  
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause, 605  
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,  
Upon whose property and most dear life  
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?  
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?  
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face? 610  
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the  
throat,

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

Ha!

'Swounds, I should take it; for it cannot be  
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall 615  
To make oppression bitter; or ere this  
I should have fatted all the region kites  
With this slave's offal; bloody, bawdy villain!

602. *faculties*] Q, *faculty* F. 613. *Ha*] separate line Steevens; begins line 614 Q, F; *Ha?* F. 614. *'Swounds*] Q, *Why* F. 618. *offal*; *bloody*,] *offall*, *bloody*, Q, *Offall*, *bloudy*: a F.

601. *amaze*] confound, as in *King John*, IV. ii. 137.

604. *peak*] to dwindle, pine; hence to play a mean part, as in *Merry Wives*, III. v. 71.

605. *John-a-dreams*] found also in Armin, *Nest of Ninnies*, 1608. "John-a-droynes" is found in Nash, *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, 1596.

605. *unpregnant*] unimpregnated, unquickened by my cause. See *Measure for Measure*, IV. iv. 23.

607. *property*] proprietorship (of crown and wife).

608. *defeat*] undoing, act of destruc-

tion, as in v. ii. 58. Chapman, *Revenge for Honour*:

"That he might meantime make a sure defeat

On our good aged father's life."

615. *pigeon-liver'd*] The pigeon was supposed to secrete no gall. So Dekker, *The Honest Whore* (Pearson's Dekker, ii. p. 20), "Sure hee's a pigeon, for he has no gall." Gall, the physical cause of rancour, bitterness.

617. *region kites*] kites of the air; see line 518.

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain !  
O, vengeance ! 620

Why, what an ass am I ! This is most brave,  
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,  
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,  
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,  
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab, 625  
A scullion !

Fie upon't ! foh ! About, my brain ! I have  
heard

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,  
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,  
Been struck so to the soul that presently 630  
They have proclaim'd their malefactions ;  
For murder, though it have no tongue, will  
speak

With most miraculous organ. I'll have these  
players

Play something like the murder of my father  
Before mine uncle ; I'll observe his looks ; 635

620. *O, vengeance !*] omitted in Q. 621. *Why,]* *Why* Q, *Who?* F ;  
*This]* Q, *I* [*i.e. Ay*] *sure, this* F. 622. *a dear father murder'd]* Q 4,  
*a deere murthered* Q, *the Deere murthered* F. 626. *scullion]* F, *stallyon*  
Q, *cullion* Theobald. 627. *brain]* F, *braines* Q ; *I]* F, *hum, I* Q.

619. *kindless]* unnatural.

622. *dear father murder'd]* Halliwell supports the reading, "a dear murdered" by comparing the phrase "the dear departed."

627. *About, my brain!]* Wits, to your work ! Steevens quotes from Heywood, *The Iron Age*, Part II. :

"My brain about again ! for thou  
hast found

New projects now to work on."  
The *Hum* of Q is a meditative

interjection, retained by *Cambridge Sh.* and by *Furness*.

628. *play]* Massinger had this passage probably in his mind in writing *The Roman Actor*, II. i. In *A Warning for Fair Women*, 1599, the tale is told of a woman led by a play to confess her husband's murder. Heywood, in his *Apology for Actors*, tells of this case, and of another at Amsterdam.

630. *presently]* immediately, as in line 170.

I'll tent him to the quick; if he but blench  
 I know my course. The spirit that I have seen  
 May be the devil; and the devil hath power  
 To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps  
 Out of my weakness and my melancholy, 640  
 As he is very potent with such spirits,  
 Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds  
 More relative than this. The play's the thing  
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.  
 [Exit.

### ACT III

#### SCENE I.—A Room in the Castle.

*Enter* KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSEN-  
 CRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* And can you, by no drift of circumstance,  
 Get from him why he puts on this confusion,

636. *he but*] F, *a doe* Q. 638. *be the devil*] F, *be a deale* Q (*deale*  
 repeated again in this line in Q).

#### *Act III. Scene I.*

1. *circumstance*] F, *conference* Q.

636. *tent*] probe, as in *Cymbeline*,  
 III. iv. 118.

636. *blench*] flinch, quail; used  
 specially of the eyes.

638. *devil*] Coleridge quotes from  
 Browne's *Religio Medici*, Part I. § 37,  
 to show that he held the belief that  
 ghosts are often devils abusing men to  
 damn them. See on this subject  
 Spalding's *Elizabethan Demonology*.

642. *Abuses*] deceives, deludes, as  
 in *Tempest*, v. i. 112.

643. *relative*] closely related, to

the purpose, conclusive; used only  
 here by Shakespeare.

#### *Act III. Scene I.*

1. *drift of circumstance*] Clar. Press  
 explain: "roundabout method," refer-  
 ring to "circumstance" in I. v. 127,  
 "drift" in II. i. 10, and both words  
 (but not in connection) in *Troilus*  
 and *Cressida*, III. iii. 113, 114. May  
 it mean tendency or significance of  
 incidental facts?

Grating so harshly all his days of quiet  
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

*Ros.* He does confess he feels himself distracted, 5  
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

*Guil.* Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,  
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,  
When we would bring him on to some confession  
Of his true state.

*Queen.* Did he receive you well? 10

*Ros.* Most like a gentleman.

*Guil.* But with much forcing of his disposition.

*Ros.* Niggard of question, but of our demands  
Most free in his reply.

*Queen.* Did you assay him  
To any pastime? 15

*Ros.* Madam, it so fell out that certain players  
We o'er-raught on the way; of these we told  
him,

And there did seem in him a kind of joy  
To hear of it; they are about the court  
And, as I think, they have already order 20  
This night to play before him.

19. *about*] *F*, *heere about Q*.

13, 14. *Niggard . . . reply*] Warburton transposed "Niggard" and "Most free." Malone explains "Niggard of question," slow to begin conversation. Clarke — over-ingeniously: "Sparing of speech when questioned, but of demands respecting ourselves he was very free in return." Clar. Press: "Perhaps they did not intend to give a correct account of the interview." The courtiers between them try to piece out an account,

which will not discredit them, of an unsuccessful interview; Rosencrantz would suggest that they have not wholly failed; Guildenstern that this was in spite of much difficulty. They wish to turn off any inquiry as to Hamlet's sharp examination of them and his discovery that they were sent for.

17. *o'er-raught*] *over-reacnea*, *over-took*.

*Pol.* 'Tis most true ;  
 And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties  
 To hear and see the matter.

*King.* With all my heart ; and it doth much content me  
 To hear him so inclined.— 25  
 Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,  
 And drive his purpose on to these delights.

*Ros.* We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;  
 For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,  
 That he, as 'twere by accident, may here 30  
 Affront Ophelia.  
 Her father and myself, lawful espials,  
 Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing unseen,  
 We may of their encounter frankly judge,  
 And gather by him, as he is behaved, 35  
 If 't be the affliction of his love or no  
 That thus he suffers for.

*Queen.* I shall obey you.—  
 And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish  
 That your good beauties be the happy cause  
 Of Hamlet's wildness ; so shall I hope your  
 virtues 40

27. on to] F, into Q. 28. too] F, two Q. 30. here] Q, there F.  
 32. lawful espials] F, omitted in Q. 33. Will] F, Wee'le Q. 38. your] Q, F ; my Qq 4-6, Pope and others. Exit Queen] Theobald, omitted Q, F.

29. closely] secretly, as in *King John*, IV. i. 133. 32. espials] spies, as in *1 Henry VI.* I. iv. 8.

31. Affront] confront, encounter, as in *Winter's Tale*, v. i. 75. 39, 40. beauties . . . virtues] S. Walker proposed *beauty* and *virtue*, which Furness adopts.

Will bring him to his wonted way again,  
To both your honours.

*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit Queen.*]

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please you,  
We will bestow ourselves. [*To Ophelia.*] Read on  
this book,

That show of such an exercise may colour 45  
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—  
'Tis too much proved,—that with devotion's visage  
And pious action we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.

*King.* [*Aside.*] Oh, 'tis too true!

How smart a lash that speech doth give my con-  
science! 50

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,  
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it  
Than is my deed to my most painted word.  
O heavy burden!

*Pol.* I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord. 55

[*Exeunt King and Polonius.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* To be, or not to be: that is the question:

43. *please you*] Q, *please ye* F. 46. *loneliness*] F, *lowlines* Q. 48. *sugar*] Q, *surge* F. 49. *Aside*] Capell, at line 50 Pope; '*tis too*] Q, '*tis* F. 55. *let's*] F, omitted Q. Enter *Hamlet*] F, after *burden*, line 54, Q.

43. *Gracious*] addressed to the King.

45. *exercise*] act of devotion (the book being one of prayers), as in *King Richard III.* III. vii. 64: "his holy exercise."

52. *to*] compared to, as in I. ii. 140.

56. *To be, or not to be* :] Explained by Johnson as a future life, or non-existence after death; by Malone, to live, or to commit suicide. G. MacDonald regards the words as the close of a preceding train of thought, not to be connected with what follows.



Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
 And by opposing end them? To die,—to  
 sleep,— 60

No more; and by a sleep to say we end  
 The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks  
 That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation  
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die;—to sleep;—  
 To sleep! perchance to dream! ay, there's the  
 rub; 65

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,

60, 61. *To die*,— . . . *No*] Pope, *die to sleepe* *No Q*, *dye, to sleepe* *No F*.  
 63. *to*,] *too*; *Q*, *too*? *F*. 64, 65. *die*;—*to sleep*;—*To sleep*!] Capell,  
*die to sleepe, To sleepe, Q, F*.

Hunter, who would place the soliloquy, with *Q* 1, in Act II. sc. ii. supposes it is suggested by the book which Hamlet is there represented as reading. Perhaps, the explanation lying in what immediately follows, it means, Is my present project of active resistance against wrong to be, or not to be? Hamlet anticipates his own death as a probable consequence.

57. *in the mind*] This is to be connected with "suffer," not with "nobler."

58. *slings and arrows*] Walker, with an anonymous writer of 1752, would read "stings." "Slings and arrows" is found in Fletcher's *Valentinian*, I. iii.

59. *sea*] Various emendations have been suggested: Theobald, "siege"; also, "th' assay" or "a 'say"; Hammer, "assailing"; Warburton, "assail of"; Bailey, "the seat." It has been shown from Aristotle, Strabo, Ælian, and Nicolas of Damascus that the Kelts, Gauls, and Cimbri exhibited their intrepidity by armed

combats with the sea, which Shakespeare might have found in Abraham Fleming's translation of Ælian, 1576. But elsewhere Shakespeare has "sea of joys," "sea of glory," "sea of care." Here the central metaphor is that of a battle ("slings and arrows"); the "sea of troubles," billows of the war, merely develops the metaphor of battle, as in Scott, *Marmion*, VI. xxvi.:

"Then mark'd they, dashing  
 broad and far,  
 The broken billows of the war,  
 And plumed crests of chieftains  
 brave,  
 Floating like foam upon the  
 wave."

63. *consummation*] Compare *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 280:

"Quiet consummation have:  
 And renowned be thy grave!"

65. *rub*] impediment, as in *King Henry V.* II. ii. 188.

67. *mortal coil*] trouble or turmoil of mortal life. In this sense *coil* occurs several times in Shakespeare,

Must give us pause: there's the respect  
 That makes calamity of so long life;  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of  
 time, 70  
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's con-  
 tumely,  
 The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,  
 The insolence of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
 When he himself might his quietus make 75  
 With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,  
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
 But that the dread of something after death,  
 The undiscover'd country from whose bourn  
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will, 80

71. *proud*] Q, *poore* F. 72. *disprized*] F, *despiz'd* Q and many editors.  
 76. *fardels*] Q, *these Fardles* F.

as in *Tempest*, I. ii. 207. He nowhere uses it in the sense of concentric rings, nor does the *New English Dictionary* give an example earlier than 1627. The notion that *mortal coil* means the body, encircling the soul, may be set aside.

68, 69. *there's . . . life*] There's the consideration that makes calamity so long-lived.

70. *time*] the times, the world, as in *King John*, v. ii. 12, "a sore of time." But perhaps it may mean time as opposed to eternity.

72. *disprized*] undervalued, misprised. *Troilus and Cressida* (Folio text), IV. v. 74: "disprising The knight opposed." The Q *despised love* is preferred by many editors.

75. *quietus*] acquittance; the law-term, "*quietus est*," for the settlement of an account; as in *Sonnets*, cxxvi. 12.

76. *bare bodkin*] unsheathed dagger; or *bare* may mean "mere." Sidney, *Arcadia*: "I . . . doe defie thee in a mortal affray from the bodkin to the pike upward."

76. *fardels*] packs, burdens, as in *Winter's Tale*, IV. iv. 728.

77. *grunt*] groan. Steevens quotes Turberville, *Ovid Epist.* xiv.: "of dying men the grunts." Compare *Julius Cæsar*, IV. i. 22: "To groan and sweat under the business."

80. *returns*] The Ghost has not crossed the bourn or boundary of death, or returned to mortal life; cock-crow and day-dawn startle him away. Perhaps, however, Hamlet at the present time, doubtful as to whether the devil may not have been abusing him (close of Act II.), will not let the apparition enter into his calculations.

And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
 Than fly to others that we know not of?  
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
 And thus the native hue of resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, 85  
 And enterprises of great pitch and moment  
 With this regard their currents turn awry  
 And lose the name of action. Soft you now!  
 The fair Ophelia? Nymph, in thy orisons  
 Be all my sins remember'd.

*Oph.* Good my lord, 90  
 How does your honour for this many a day?

83. *of us all*] Q 1, F; omitted Q. 86. *pitch*] Q, *pitch* F. 87. *awry*] Q,  
*away* F. 89. *Ophelia?*] F, *Ophelia*, Q, *Ophelia*! Hanmer.

85. *thought*] often used of anxious or melancholy thought, as in *Julius Cæsar*, II. i. 187: "take thought and die for Cæsar." See IV. v. 187.

86. *pitch*] height, as in *King Richard III.* III. vii. 188; used of a falcon's soaring, *1 King Henry VI.* II. iv. 11. The Folio *pitch* is preferred by many editors, and appears in late Quartos from 1676 onwards.

88. *action*] With the thought of action this soliloquy opens and closes. The train of ideas is as follows:—Active resistance to evil or passive fortitude—which is more worthy of me? To end troubles—perhaps by one's own death? Well, the sleep of death will be most welcome; but what if there be terrible dreams? The fear of the hereafter is universal, else men would not endure the ills of life; and thus it is that, perplexed by calculating consequences, we drop away from heroic action. Parallels, as possible sources for parts of this soliloquy, have been pointed out in Catullus (no traveller returns), Cardan (death a sleep), Seneca (no traveller returns, and fear of futurity), Mon-

taigne (sea of troubles, death a desirable "consummation," conscience makes cowards), Cornelius Agrippa (country of the dead irremovable), Marlowe's *Edward II.* (Mortimer goes as a traveller to discover countries yet unknown). It seems probable, as Professor Skeat notices, that there are reminiscences here of the translation ascribed to Chaucer of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, lines 5637–5696; the word *fardels* is perhaps one of the echoes from this passage. It is worth noting that Mr. G. Macdonald eliminates the thought of suicide from the soliloquy, supposing that the bare bodkin is imagined as directed against an enemy. Suicide, indeed, is not the theme of the soliloquy, but it incidentally enters into it. "Clelia" in his *God in Shakespeare* construes the opening sentence thus: "Whether 'tis nobler to bear evil or to resist it the question is To be, or not to be, *i.e.* Is there a life after death?" The note of interrogation after "end them," line 60, was first introduced by Pope.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you ; well, well, well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
That I have longed long to re-deliver ;  
I pray you now, receive them.

*Ham.* No, not I ; 95  
I never gave you aught.

*Oph.* My honour'd lord, you know right well you did ;  
And, with them, words of so sweet breath composed  
As made the things more rich ; their perfume  
lost,  
Take these again ; for to the noble mind 100  
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.  
There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

*Oph.* My lord ?

*Ham.* Are you fair ? 105

*Oph.* What means your lordship ?

92. *you ; well, well, well.*] F, *you well.* Q. 95. *you now,*] F, *you now*  
Q, *you, now* Theobald and other editors ; *No, not I*] Q, *No, no* F.  
97. *you know*] Q, *I know* F and many editors. 99. *the things*] F, *these*  
*things* Q ; *rich ; their perfume lost*] Q, *rich, then perfume left* : F, *rich, than*  
*perfume left* F 4.

96. *ought*] For a moment Hamlet has been touched by the sight of Ophelia with her book of prayers. Yet there is estrangement in the word "Nymph." She inquires for his health (having seen him yesterday) ; he answers as to a stranger ; formally, as he does to Osric, v. ii. 82 ; and with some impatience ; he will tell her nothing. She produces his gifts ; he has been sent for by the King ; Ophelia, like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, has doubtless also been sent for ; he falls back on his accustomed method of baffling half-truths. These toys were the gift of another Hamlet to another Ophelia—not his.

99. *their perfume*] the perfume of the gifts, derived from the sweet words.

101. *unkind*] The sententious generalisation, couched in rhyme, has an air of having been prepared. And whence this false accusation of unkindness ? Has she not rehearsed her part to Polonius ?

103. *honest*] a word which covers both truthfulness and chastity. For the meaning "chaste" Staunton quotes an apt example from Shirley, *The Royal Master*, iv. i. Withals' *Dictionary* (1608), p. 73 : "She is faire, that is honest : est alma sancta."

*Ham.* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty? 110

*Ham.* Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness; this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love 115 you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it; I loved you not. 120

*Oph.* I was the more deceived.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery; why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent

107. *your honesty*] F, you Q. 110. *with*] Q, your F. 119. *inoculate*] F, *evocut* Q, *evacuate* Qq 4-6. 122. *to*] F, omitted Q.

107, 108.] Hamlet had ironically baffled Polonius by commending his wisdom in restraining and secluding Ophelia; the same irony will serve again. Your father and brother were right; your virtue should permit no one to hold converse with your beauty. Ophelia replies as if Hamlet had said that beauty and honesty should not hold converse with each other, and he accepts her reading of his words.

109. *commerce*] intercourse, as in *Twelfth Night*, III. iv. 191.

111-116.] I loved you once—in the days when it was a paradox—an absurdity—to say that beauty could sooner transform virtue into a procuress for lust than virtue could translate beauty to its own likeness. But now, the world, the present time, proves the

paradox true; Hamlet thinks of his mother; of his own honesty represented as a wanton passion for beauty; of Ophelia's virtue, which cannot be trusted by Polonius to act as guardian of her beauty, but will rather corrupt his and her honesty.

119. *inoculate*] used in the botanical sense, to graft by the insertion of a bud; virtue cannot so graft love in our old evil stock but that we shall have a flavour of this evil stock. So Bishop Hall: "That Palatine vine, late inoculated with a precious bud of our royal stem."

120. *I loved you not*] it was not true love, for the taint of evil was in it; so your father has told you, and you have acted in accordance with his orders.

123. *indifferent*] fairly, as in v. ii. 97.



honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

*Oph.* Oh, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go; farewell. Or, if

127. *beck*] Q, F; *backe* Q 1. 131. *heaven and earth*] Q 1, F; *earth and heaven* Q. 132. *all*] Q 1, F; omitted Q. 136. *no where*] Q, *no way* F. 138, 147.] marked Aside, Furness. 142. *go*] F, omitted Q.

126, 127. *very proud, revengeful, ambitious*] Hamlet brings general accusations against manhood and womanhood; but these particular vices are ironically named as those of which he has been suspected or calumniously accused: very proud, he who honours the poor Horatio, and hails the actor as a friend, yet he is suspected of treating Ophelia lightly, as an inferior who may be basely used; revengeful, he who groans under the duty of vengeance, yet who is doubtless suspected of revenge by the King; ambitious, he who would go back to Wittenberg, and could be contented

in a nutshell, yet whose disappointed ambition has been a subject for the probing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

133. *Where's your father*] Perhaps an arrow shot at a venture; or perhaps he has caught sight of the King and Polonius as they retire. It is to be considered as a possibility that Ophelia may not have been aware of her father's espionage.

141. *calumny*] Is this promise of dowry half meant for Polonius's ear? His calumnies of Hamlet will come home to roost on his own house.



thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and 145 quickly too. Farewell.

*Oph.* O heavenly powers, restore him!

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you 150 amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say we will have no more marriages; those that are married already, all 155 but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [Exit.

*Oph.* Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state, 160

147. *O*] F, omitted Q. 148. *paintings*] Q 1, Q; *prattlings* F; *prattling* Ff 2-4; 100] F, omitted Q. 149. *has*] F, *hath* Q; *face*] Q 1, Q; *pace* F. 150. *yourselves*] Q, *your selfe* F; *jig*] Q 1676, *gig* Q, *gidge* F, *fig* Q 1. 150, 151. *you amble*] F, and *amble* Q. 151. *lisp*] F, *list* Q; and *nickname*] F, *you nickname* Q. 152, 153. *your ignorance*] Q 1, F; *ignorance* Q. 154, 155. *no more marriages*] Q 1, F; *no mo marriage* Q. 159. *soldier's, scholar's*] Q, F; *scholler, souldier* Q 1. 160. *expectancy*] F, *expectation* Q.

144. *monsters*] Delius refers to *Othello*, IV. i. 63: "A horned man's a monster." So Fletcher, *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, II. i.: "Though he [a wronged husband] see himself become a monster." Hamlet reproaches Ophelia only through the general evil of womanhood.

148. *paintings*] The F "prattlings" and "pace" are possibly not misprints; "pace" referring to "jig" and "amble"; "prattlings" to "lisp" and "nickname."

151. *nickname*] call things by names of immodest suggestion, and profess childish ignorance. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, II. i. 35: "that kind of fruit As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone."

155, 156. *all but one*] a shaft meant to strike the eves-dropping King.

159. *soldier's, scholar's*] The order "scholar's, soldier's" corresponding to "tongue, sword" may be more rhetorically, but not therefore dramatically, correct.

The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,  
 The observed of all observers, quite, quite  
 down!  
 And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
 That suck'd the honey of his music vows,  
 Now see that noble and most sovereign reason, 165  
 Like sweet bells jangled out of tune, and  
 harsh;  
 That unmatch'd form and feature of blown  
 youth  
 Blasted with ecstasy; Oh, woe is me,  
 To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

*Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.*

*King.* Love? his affections do not that way tend; 170  
 Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a  
 little,  
 Was not like madness. There's something in his  
 soul  
 O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;  
 And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose

163. *And I* Q, *Have I* F. 164. *music* F, *musicke* Q. 165. *that noble* F, *what noble* Q. 166. *jangled out of tune*, F, *jangled out of time*, Q, *jangled, out of tune* Capell and many editors. 167. *feature* F, *stature* Q. 169. *see I* Q marks Exit here. So Elze. 170. *Love?* F, *Love*, Q.

162. *observed of all observers*] Perhaps meaning honoured by all who pay the marks of honour, a common meaning of *observer*.

166. *tune*] The Q misprint *time* occurs in F, *Macbeth*, iv. iii. 235.

167. *feature*] the whole shape or cast of the body, as frequently in Shakespeare.

168. *ecstasy*] see II. i. 102.

169. *see I*] Elze supposes that

Ophelia withdraws to seek her father, returns at line 186, and is immediately sent away.

170. *affections*] emotions or passions.

174. *disclose*] Steevens quotes *The Booke of Huntynge, Hawkyng, Fishing*: "First they ben eges, and after they ben *disclosed* haukes." See v. i. 309.

Will be some danger; which for to prevent, 175  
I have in quick determination

Thus set it down: he shall with speed to  
England,

For the demand of our neglected tribute:

Haply the seas and countries different

With variable objects shall expel 180

This something-settled matter in his heart,

Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus

From fashion of himself. What think you on 't?

*Pol.* It shall do well; but yet do I believe

The origin and commencement of his grief 185

Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?

You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;

We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;

But, if you hold it fit, after the play,

Let his queen mother all alone entreat him 190

To show his grief; let her be round with him;

And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear

Of all their conference. If she find him not,

To England send him, or confine him where

Your wisdom best shall think.

*King.* It shall be so: 195

Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*]

175. *for to*] Q, *to* F. 181. *something-settled*] hyphenated by Warburton.  
185. *his grief*] Q, *this greefe* F. 186. Elze marks Enter Ophelia.  
188.] Theobald marks Exit Ophelia. 191. *grief*] Q, *Greefes* F. 192.  
*placed, so please you,*] Q (*so . . . you*) in parentheses, *plac'd so, please you* F.  
196. *unwatch'd*] F, *unmatch* Q.

191. *round*] see II. ii. 139.

193. *find*] detect, as in *All's Well*,  
v. ii. 46.

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

*Enter HAMLET and two or three of the Players.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with 5 your hand, thus; but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. Oh, it offends me to the soul 10 to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise; I would have such a 15 fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod; pray you, avoid it.

3. *your players*] Q 1, F; *our players* Q. 4. *spoke*] Q, *had spoke* F.  
5, 6. *much with your*] Q, *much your* F, *much, your* Caldecott. 8. *the whirlwind of passion*] F, *whirlwind of your passion* Q. 11. *hear*] Q, *see* F.  
15. *would*] Q 1, Q; *could* F.

8, 9. *acquire and beget*] acquire, through training and practice; beget, through a native artistic impulse.

11. *robustious*] sturdy, as in *King Henry V.* III. vii. 159.

11. *periwig-pated*] Steevens quotes from *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609: "as none wear . . . periwigs but players and pictures."

13. *groundlings*] spectators of the play who stood in the pit, paying, as we learn from Jonson, a penny for admission; *capable*, receptive, apprehensive.

16. *Termagant*] the god of the Saracens, as represented in old romances and mystery plays. Florio, 1611: "*Termigisto*, a great boaster, quarreller, killer, tamer or ruler of the universe; the child of the earthquake and of the thunder, the brother of death."

17. *Herod*] the violent Herod of old sacred plays. In the Coventry play of the Nativity a braggart speech is followed by the stage direction, "Here Erode ragis in thys pagond and in the strete also."

*First Play.* I warrant your honour.

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own  
discretion be your tutor; suit the action to the 20  
word, the word to the action; with this special  
observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty  
of nature; for any thing so overdone is from  
the purpose of playing, whose end, both at  
the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 25  
'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show  
virtue her own feature, scorn her own image,  
and the very age and body of the time his  
form and pressure. Now this overdone, or  
come tardy off, though it make the unskilful 30  
laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve;  
the censure of the which one must in your  
allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others.  
Oh, there be players that I have seen play,  
and heard others praise, and that highly, not 35  
to speak it profanely, that neither having  
the accent of Christians nor the gait of

18, 43. First Player] Capell; Player Q, F. 22. o'erstep] Q, ore-stop F.  
23. overdone] F, ore-doone Q. 27. her own feature] F, her feature Q.  
30. off] F, of Q 6, Theobald, Furness; make] F, makes Q. 32. the  
which one] F, which one Q. 33. o'erweigh] Q, F; ore-sway Ff 2-4.  
35. praise] F, prayse Q.

23. from] away from, contrary to, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. i. 116:  
as in *Julius Caesar*, I. iii. 35. "it came hardly off"; *Timon of*  
28. very age] actual generation. *Athens*, I. i. 29: "this comes off well  
Bailey proposes "visage," comparing and excellent."  
2 *Henry IV.* II. iii. 3: "visage of 32. censure] judgment, as in I.  
the times." iii. 69.  
29. pressure] impress. Compare I. 36. profanely] refers to what fol-  
v. 100. lows about the creation of men, not  
30. come tardy off] as we say by God, but by nature's journey-  
"hanging fire"; coming to an issue men.  
slowly and ineffectively. Compare

Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted  
and bellowed that I have thought some of  
nature's journeymen had made men and not 40  
made them well, they imitated humanity so  
abominably.

*First Play.* I hope we have reformed that in-  
differently with us, sir.

*Ham.* Oh, reform it altogether. And let those 45  
that play your clowns speak no more than is  
set down for them; for there be of them that  
will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity  
of barren spectators to laugh too, though in  
the mean time some necessary question of 50  
the play be then to be considered; that's  
villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition  
in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—

[*Exeunt Players.*]

*Enter* POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this  
piece of work? 55

*Pol.* And the queen too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the players make haste.—

[*Exit Polonius.*]

38. *nor man*] Q, or *Norman* F, *nor Turke* Q 1. 40. *men*] Q, F; *them*  
Theobald conj., Rann, Furness; *the men*, Farmer conj., Hudson. 44. *sir*]  
F, omitted Q. 57. *Exit Polonius*] F, omitted Q.

38. *nor man*] Farmer needlessly  
conjectured "nor Mussulman"; see  
Q 1 reading.

44. *indifferently*] see III. i. 123.

46. *clowns*] The "extemporall wit"  
of Wilson and of Tarlton is praised  
by Stowe. In Q 1 examples of the  
clown's jests are given by Hamlet.

Collier supposed that the passage in  
Q 1 might have been levelled at  
Kemp, "who about the date quitted  
the company of players to which  
Shakespeare had always belonged."  
See p. 232 *post*.

56. *presently*] immediately, as in  
II. ii. 170.



Will you two help to hasten them?

*Ros., Guil.* We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

*Ham.* What ho! Horatio!

60

*Enter HORATIO.*

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man

As e'er my conversation coped withal.

*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter;

For what advancement may I hope from thee, 65

That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,

To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor  
be flatter'd?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,

And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee

Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou  
hear? 70

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,

And could of men distinguish, her election

Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been

59. *Ros., Guil.*] Dyce, Both F, *Ros. Q*; *We will*] F, *I [= Ay]* Q. 64. *lord*,  
—] Rowe, *Lord. Q*, F. 68. *tongue lick*] Q, *tongue, like F.* 70. *fawn-*  
*ing.*] *fauning*; Q, *faining*? F. 71. *her*] Q, *my F.* 72. *distinguish*,  
*her election*] F, *distinguish her election* Q. 73. *Hath*] F, *S'hath* Q, *She*  
*kath* Malone.

62. *just*] Hamlet, at this moment,  
needs before all else a man of sound  
judgment, unswayed by passion. The  
eulogy that follows has here a dramatic  
propriety.

63. *coped withal*] as ever my inter-  
course with men encountered. So  
*copest* in *Winter's Tale*, iv. iv. 435.

66. *revenue*] accented here on the

second syllable. The accent varies  
in Shakespeare.

68. *candied*] sugared.

69. *pregnant*] Schmidt: "dis-  
posed, ready, prompt." Perhaps,  
quick with meaning. Furness ex-  
plains, "because untold thrift is born  
from a cunning use of the knee."

71. *dear*] see i. ii. 182.

As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;  
 A man that fortune's buffets and rewards 75  
 Hath ta'en with equal thanks; and bless'd are those  
 Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled  
 That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger  
 To sound what stop she please. Give me that man  
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him 80  
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,  
 As I do thee. Something too much of this.  
 There is a play to-night before the king;  
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance  
 Which I have told thee of my father's death: 85  
 I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,  
 Even with the very comment of thy soul  
 Observe mine uncle; if his occulted guilt  
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,  
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen, 90  
 And my imaginations are as foul  
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;  
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,  
 And after we will both our judgments join  
 In censure of his seeming. 95

*Hor.*

Well, my lord: 95

76. *Hath*] F, *Hast* Q. 77. *commingled*] Dyce, *co-mingled* F, *comedled* Q.  
 85. *thee of*] Q, *thee, of* F. 87. *thy*] Q, *my* F. 88. *mine*] F, *my* Q.  
 92. *heedful*] Q, *needfull* F. 95. *In*] Q, *To* F.

77. *blood and judgment*] passion and reason; see i. iii. 6.

80, 81.] Douce: "From this speech Anthony Scoloker, in his *Daiphantus*, 1604 [sig. E], has stolen the following line: 'Oh, I would weare her in my heart's-heart-gore.'"

87. *comment of thy soul*] the emphasis is on *soul*; with the most in-

ward and sagacious criticism. The F *my* would make Hamlet's judgment the text, and Horatio's the comment.

89. *one speech*] Hamlet's dozen or sixteen lines: II. ii. 576.

92. *stithy*] possibly here a forge; often an anvil.

95. *censure*] as in line 32.

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,  
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

*Ham.* They are coming to the play; I must be idle:  
Get you a place.

*Danish March. A Flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and other Lords attendant, with the Guard, carrying torches.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet? 100

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish:  
I eat the air, promise-crammed; you cannot  
feed capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet;  
these words are not mine. 105

*Ham.* No, nor mine now.—[*To Polonius.*] My  
lord, you played once i' the university, you  
say?

*Pol.* That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good  
actor. 110

*Ham.* And what did you enact?

97. *detecting*] F, *detected* Q. Danish March . . . torches] substantially from F. Enter Trumpets and Kettle Drummes, King, Queene, Polonius, Ophelia Q after line 97. 106. *mine now.*—[*My lord.*] Johnson, *mine now my lord.* Q, *mine.* Now my lord, F. 109. *did I*] Q, *I did* F. 111. *And what*] F, *What* Q.

98. *idle*] crazy. In Q 1 Hamlet's mother, in the interview after the play, bids him forget these "idle fits"; he replies:

"Idle! no mother, my pulse doth  
beate like yours;

It is not madness that possesseth  
Hamlet."

Perhaps, however, it means here no more than unoccupied with any affair.

101. *chameleon's dish*] So Rowlands, *Lett. Humours Blood*, 1600: "Can men feede like camelions on the ayer?" In Browne's *Vulgar Errors* the matter is discussed.

107. *university*] University plays, in Latin or in English, form an important group of our elder drama. The title-page of *Hamlet*, Q 1, states that it was acted "in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford."

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar; I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready? 115

*Ros.* Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

*Pol.* [*To the King.*] Oh, ho! do you mark that? 120

*Ham.* Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*]

*Oph.* No, my lord.

*Ham.* I mean, my head upon your lap?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Do you think I meant country matters? 125

*Oph.* I think nothing, my lord.

*Ham.* That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

*Oph.* What is, my lord?

*Ham.* Nothing.

*Oph.* You are merry, my lord. 130

*Ham.* Who, I?

*Oph.* Ay, my lord.

117. *dear*] Q, *good* F. 120. *To the King*] Capell, adding *Aside*.  
121. *Lying* . . . *feet*] Rowe. 123, 124. *Ham.* *I mean* . . . *lord*]  
omitted Q. 125. *country*] Q, F; *contrary* Q 1.

113. *Capitol*] The error as to the place of Cæsar's death appears in Chaucer, *Monkes Tale*, and in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*. So Fletcher, *The Noble Gentleman*, v. i.

115. *calf*] dolt, as in v. i. 126.

125. *country matters*] rustic proceedings. Johnson conjectured *country manners*, as in *King John*, i. i. 156. I suspect that there is

some indelicate suggestion in *country*. In *Westward Hoe*, v. i., I find: "Though we lie all night out of the city, they shall not find country wenches of us," meaning we will not wrong our husbands; and in *Northward Hoe*, III. i. (spoken of a harlot), "a good commonwealthes woman she was borne. For her country, and has borne her country."

*Ham.* O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father 135 died within's two hours.

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

*Ham.* So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? 140 Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r lady, he must build churches then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is "For, O! for, O! the hobby- 145 horse is forgot."

*Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.*

136. *within's*] Q, F; *within these* Q 1.

133. *jig-maker*] see II. ii. 531.

136. *within's*] within this.

139. *sables*] Warburton read, "fore I'll have a suit of sable." Johnson observed that the fur of sables is not black; a suit trimmed with sables was magnificent, and not a mourning garment. Hudson adopts a suggestion of Wightwick, and reads *sabell*, flame-colour. But Hamlet's jest lies in the ambiguity of the word; sables, the fur and sable, the black of heraldry. See IV. vii. 81, whence it appears that sables were the livery of "settled age." What an age since my father died! I am quite an old gentleman! (with an ambiguity of apparent self-contradiction in Hamlet's manner, on the meaning *black*); I mean to be rich and comfortable, and the devil must be the only personage who always wears black, his accustomed garb.

144. *suffer not thinking on*] under-go oblivion.

144. *hobby-horse*] a figure of May-games and morris-dances, the figure of a horse strapped round the actor's waist, his feet being concealed by a foot-cloth. "The hobby-horse is forgot" occurs in *Love's Labour's Lost*, III. i. 30, and in several Elizabethan dramas. Probably the Puritans had for a time succeeded in banishing him from May sports. See Beaumont and Fletcher, *Women Pleased*, IV. i., for an amusing scene of Puritan *versus* hobby-horse.

146. *dumb-show*] The description of the dumb-show here varies only in unessential points from that of F. In Q the differences are not important. But Q 1 deserves to be quoted: "Enter in a Dumb Shew, the King and the Queene, he sits down in an Arbor, she leaves him: Then enters

*Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly ; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck : lays him down upon a bank of flowers : she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns ; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts ; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.* [Exeunt.

Lucianus with Poyson in a Viall, and powres it in his eares, and goes away : Then the Queene commeth and finds him dead ; and goes away with the other." In our elder drama dumb-show was employed occasionally to indicate action not developed by subsequent dialogue, or in a kind of allegory to shadow forth what was to follow. Shakespeare's use of it here is singular. Hunter cited an example of Danish soldiers in England, 1688, presenting the action of a sacred drama, given in Danish, in dumb-show before the play, and assumed that this was a common practice of the Danish theatre. Elze conjectured that English actors of Shakespeare's time on the Continent expounded the action of plays in this way. Ophelia suggests that the show may import the argument ; but, according to English practice, such a supposition was not warranted, except in so far that it might symbolically indicate the general tendency of the action.

The King, on the other hand, does not recognise in the dumb-show the argument ; see line 245 : his suspicions would doubtless be aroused, and he would watch the play with keener interest, but he might suppose that the dumb-show presented, in English fashion, action which was not to be developed through dialogue. Hamlet would have thus a double opportunity of catching the conscience of the King. The following passage has perhaps not been quoted in connection with the use of dumb-show : *Ianua Linguarum Quadrilinguis ; or, A Messe of Tongues*, 1617 [by J. Barbier] ; the writer explains why he puts his "Advertisement" at the end of the volume : "As in a Comedie the Prologue, or in a Tragedie the Chorus, is not for the most acute spectator, able (and more delighted) of himselfe to discerne the pretention of every Act presented, though intimated onely in a dumbe shew."



*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

*Oph.* Belike this show imports the argument of the 150 play?

*Enter Prologue.*

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow; the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

*Oph.* Will he tell us what this show meant?

*Ham.* Ay, or any show that you'll show him; be 155 not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

*Oph.* You are naught, you are naught: I'll mark the play.

*Pro.* For us, and for our tragedy, 160  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your hearing patiently. [Exit.

*Ham.* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

148. *this is*] F, *this* Q; *miching mallecho*] Malone, *munching Mallico* Q  
*Miching Malicho* F, *myching Mallico* Q 1; *it*] Q, *that* F. 151. *play?*] F,  
*play.* Q. Enter Prologue] Theobald; after *fellow*, line 152 Q; after *play*,  
line 159 F. 152. *this fellow*] Q, *these fellows* F. 153. *counsel*] F,  
omitted Q. 154. *he*] Pope, a Q, *they* F. 155. *you'll*] F, *you will* Q.  
162. Exit] Globe Sh.; omitted Q, F.

148. *miching mallecho*] skulking mischief. Minshew gives "To miche, orsecretly tohide himself out of the way, as Truants doe from schoole"; Florio has "to miche, to shrug, or sneake in some corner." See "micher," truant, in *1 Henry IV.* II. iv. 449. "Mallecho," Spanish *malhecho*, mischief. So Shirley, *Gentleman of Venice*: "Be humble, Thou man of mallecho, or thou diest."

158. *naught*] improper, licentious. Bunyan in *Grace Abounding* declares that he never "so much as attempted to be naught with women." So Dekker, *The Honest Whore* (Pearson's Dekker, ii. p. 54).

163. *posy*] See *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 147-150. Posies incised on rings were necessarily brief.

*Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

165

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter two Players, King and Queen.*

*P. King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round

*Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,  
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen  
About the world have times twelve thirties been, 170  
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.*

*P. Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and moon  
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!  
But, woe is me! you are so sick of late, 175  
So far from cheer and from your former state,  
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,  
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;  
For women's fear and love holds quantity,  
In neither aught, or in extremity. 180  
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know,  
And as my love is sized, my fear is so;

166. Enter . . . Queen] Globe, Enter King and Queene Q, Enter King and his Queene F, Enter the Duke and Dutchesse Q 1. 168. orb'd] F, orb'd the Q. 176. your] F, our Q. 179. For] F, And Q, preceded by the following unrhymed line: "For women feare too much, even as they love"; holds] F, hold Q. 180. In neither aught] F (with spelling ought), Eyther none, in neither ought Q. 181. love] F, Lord Q.

167. cart] chariot. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, v. viii. 34: "On every side of his embatteld cart." These lines resemble lines beginning "Thrice ten times Phœbus," near the opening of Act IV. of Greene's *Alphonsus*.

178. must] Perhaps a line, rhyming with that given in Q, has been lost; perhaps the Q line had been cancelled and was printed by mistake.

179. holds quantity] keep proportion to each other. See *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I. i. 232.

180. In neither aught] Ingleby proposed "In either naught." Hunter would punctuate "hold quantity In neither:—aught." Capell explains: "They either feel none of these passions, or feel them both in extremity."

*Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear,  
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.*

P. King. *'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too; 185  
My operant powers their functions leave to do;  
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,  
Honour'd, beloved; and haply one as kind  
For husband shalt thou—*

P. Queen. *Oh, confound the rest !  
Such love must needs be treason in my breast; 190  
In second husband let me be accurst !  
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.*

Ham. [Aside.] *Wormwood, wormwood !*

P. Queen. *The instances that second marriage move  
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love; 195  
A second time I kill my husband dead,  
When second husband kisses me in bed.*

P. King. *I do believe you think what now you speak,  
But what we do determine oft we break.  
Purpose is but the slave to memory, 200*

183, 184.] Q, omitted F. 186. their functions] Q, my Functions F.  
193. Aside] Capell; omitted Q, F; *Wormwood, wormwood !*] F, *That's wormwood.* Q, *O wormwood, wormwood !* Q 1. 198. you think] Q, you. Think F.

186. leave] cease.

194. instances] motives, inducements, as in *King Henry V.* II. ii. 119.

195. respects] considerations, as in III. i. 68.

196. kill . . . dead] kill my husband, he being dead (though examples of the tautology "kill dead," meaning "kill," occur in Shakespeare). The reading of Q 1 "lord that's dead" gives the sense.

200-225.] Furness gives a long summary of a longer discussion as to which lines are the dozen or sixteen written by Hamlet, or whether it is meant by Shakespeare that any lines

which actually appear should be identified as his. Lines in the present speech, it is argued, are singularly in Hamlet's vein; they look like an insertion; they do not advance the action; they are meant to catch the conscience of Hamlet's mother; the plot sufficiently convicts the King. On the other hand, it is argued, that the Poisoner's speech (perhaps interrupted before its close) is meant; that Hamlet clearly indicates this to Horatio, and that he warns the player against mouthing a passionate speech. Perhaps all this is to inquire too curiously into a dramatic device of

*Of violent birth but poor validity ;  
 Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,  
 But fall unshaken when they mellow be.  
 Most necessary 'tis that we forget  
 To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt ;      205  
 What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
 The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.  
 The violence of either grief or joy  
 Their own enactures with themselves destroy ;  
 Where joy most revels grief doth most lament ;      210  
 Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.  
 This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange  
 That even our loves should with our fortunes change,  
 For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,  
 Whether love lead fortune or else fortune love.      215  
 The great man down, you mark his favourite  
     flies ;  
 The poor advanced makes friends of enemies ;  
 And hitherto doth love on fortune tend ;  
 For who not needs shall never lack a friend ;  
 And who in want a hollow friend doth try      220*

202. like] F, the Q.      208. either] Q, other F.      209. enactures] Q,  
 enactors F.      211. Grief . . . grieves] F, Greefe ioy, ioy griefes, Q.  
 216. favourite] Q, fauourites F.

Shakespeare's, designed to lessen the improbability of the "murder of Gonzago" so exactly fitting the occasion; designed also to show Hamlet as a critic of theatrical art, and indirectly to instruct an Elizabethan audience in theatrical matters. Undoubtedly this speech reflects back on both the Queen and Hamlet himself, but this was Shakespeare's doing, and clearly intentional; if we were

forced to identify Hamlet's lines, we must needs point to the speech of Lucianus. Sir H. Irving, as Hamlet, mutters the Poisoner's words with suppressed passion while they are being delivered by the actor.

204, 205.] Our resolves are debts to ourselves; why embarrass ourselves by inconvenient payments?

209. enactures] fulfilments, carrying into act.

*Directly seasons him his enemy.  
 But, orderly to end where I begun,  
 Our wills and fates do so contrary run  
 That our devices still are overthrown,  
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own: 225  
 So think thou wilt no second husband wed,  
 But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.*

P. Queen. *Nor earth to me give food nor heaven light!  
 Sport and repose lock from me day and night!  
 To desperation turn my trust and hope! 230  
 An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!  
 Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,  
 Meet what I would have well and it destroy!  
 Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,  
 If, once a widow, ever I be wife! 235*

Ham. *If she should break it now!*

P. King. *'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile;  
 My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile  
 The tedious day with sleep. [Sleeps.*

P. Queen. *Sleep rock thy brain;  
 And never come mischance between us twain! 240  
 [Exit.*

228. to me give] Q, to give me F. 230, 231. To desperation . . .  
 scope] Q, omitted F. 231. An anchor's] Theobald, And anchors Q.  
 235. once . . . wife] Q 1, F; once I be a widdow, ever I be a wife Q.  
 236. now!] Dyce; now. Q, F; now— Pope. 239. Sleeps] F (after  
 brain), omitted Q.

221. seasons] Schmidt and Clar.  
 Press: "matures, ripens," see i.  
 iii. 81; but perhaps it means qualifies,  
 tempers.

231. anchor's cheer] anchoret's  
 chair. So Bishop Hall, *Satires*, iv.  
 ii. 103: "Sit seaven yeares pining in  
 an anchores cheyre." *Cheer* is ex-

plained—perhaps rightly—by Clar.  
 Press and others "fare," but "scope"  
 supports the meaning illustrated by  
 Hall.

232. opposite, that blanks] contrary  
 thing that makes pale. So Sylvester's  
*Du Bartas*, 1605: "His brow was  
 never blankt with pallid fear."



*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play?

*Queen.* The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

*Ham.* O, but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument? Is there no  
offence in 't? 245

*Ham.* No, no; they do but jest, poison in jest; no  
offence i' the world.

*King.* What do you call the play?

*Ham.* The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically.  
This play is the image of a murder done in 250  
Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his  
wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a  
knavish piece of work; but what o' that?  
your majesty, and we that have free souls, it  
touches us not; let the galled jade wince, our 255  
withers are unwrung.—

242. *doth protest*] Q, *protests* F. 249. *Tropically*] Q, F; *trapiically* Q 1.  
253. *o'*] F, *of* Q, a Q 1. 255. *wince*] Q 1; *winch* Q, F.

249. *Tropically*] called The Mouse-trap (catching the conscience of the king) by way of a trope or figure. The "trapiically" of Q 1 suggests that a pun is intended.

251. *Gonzago*] In 1538 the Duke of Urbano, married to a Gonzaga, was murdered by Luigi Gonzaga, who dropped poison into his ear. Shakespeare, it is suggested, might have found this writ in choice Italian, might have transferred the name Gonzaga to the murdered man, and formed "Lucianus" from Luigi. "The duke" seems to be an oversight. In Q 1 the murdered man and his wife are Duke and Dutchesse throughout, except in the dumb-show, where they are King and Queen; in the altered form perhaps "duke" was here erroneously retained. It is, how-

ever, true, as Walker and Elze point out, that "Duke" and "King" are not always differentiated by Elizabethan writers. As to the name "Baptista," Hunter says he has seen a few instances of the name as borne by women in England. "It had a feminine termination; that was enough. Shakespeare has given it to a man in *The Taming of the Shrew*." It has been shown by A. von Reumont (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 21, 1870) that Baptista was used in Italy as the Christian name of a woman. See *Sh. Jahrbuch*, xxxi. 169, for another Gonzaga murder.

254. *free*] see II. ii. 600.

255. *let the galled jade wince*] a proverbial saying; found in Edwardes, *Damon and Pythias*, and Lyly, *Euphues*.



*Enter Player, as LUCIANUS.*

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love,  
if I could see the puppets dallying. 260

*Oph.* You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

*Ham.* It would cost you a groaning to take off my  
edge.

*Oph.* Still better, and worse.

*Ham.* So you mistake your husbands.—Begin, 265  
murderer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and  
begin. Come: the croaking raven doth bellow  
for revenge.

*Luc.* *Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time  
agreeing;*

*Confederate season, else no creature seeing; 270*

258. *as good as a*] Q I, Q; *a good* F. 262. *my*] F, *mine* Q. 265. *mis-*  
*take your husbands*] Q, *mistake husbands* F, *must take your husband* Q. I.  
266. *pox*] F, omitted Q, *a poxe* Q I. 270. *Confederate*] Q I, F; *Con-*  
*siderat* Q.

258. *chorus*] which explains the  
action of a play, as in *Winter's Tale*,  
*Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry V.*

259, 260. *interpret . . . puppets*]  
an interpreter on the stage expounded  
the puppet-shows; see *Two Gentlemen*  
*of Verona*, II. i. 101. Steevens quotes  
Greene, *Groatsworth of Wit*: "It was  
I that . . . for seven years' space was  
absolute interpreter of the puppets."  
"Your love," your lover.

264. *better, and worse*] Caldecott:  
"more keen and less decorous."

265. *mistake*] Pope read "must  
take" with Q I, and has been followed  
by many editors; but this effaces  
Hamlet's insult to womanhood.  
Brides, according to the marriage-

service, take their husbands "for  
better, for worse." Hamlet means  
that women do not take them but  
mis-take them (as Capell prints it) in  
these words, for the words are not  
fulfilled; you all are faithless wives—  
with a thought of his mother.

267. *croaking raven*] Simpson  
(*Academy*, December 19, 1874) shows  
that Hamlet rolls into one two lines  
of *The True Tragedie of Richard the*  
*Third*—ghosts of those whom Richard  
has slain in reaching for a crown come  
gaping for revenge:

"The screeking raven sits croaking for  
revenge,  
Whole herds of beasts come bellow-  
ing for revenge."

*Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,  
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,  
Thy natural magic and dire property,  
On wholesome life usurp immediately.*

*[Pours the poison into the Sleeper's ears.]*

*Ham.* He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. 275  
His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and  
writ in choice Italian; you shall see anon how  
the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

*Oph.* The king rises!

*Ham.* What, frightened with false fire! 280

*Queen.* How fares my lord?

*Pol.* Give o'er the play.

*King.* Give me some light.—Away!

*All.* Lights, lights, lights!

*[Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.]*

*Ham.* Why, let the stricken deer go weep, 285

The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

So runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers,—

272. ban] Q, F; bane Q 1. 274. usurp] F; usurps Q 1, Q. 275. for's] F; for his Q 1, Q. 277. writ in] F, written in very Q. 280. What, . . . fire!] Theobald, What, . . . fire. F, omitted Q, What, . . . fires? Q 1. 284. All.] F, Pol. Q. 285. Why, let] Theobald; Why let Q, F; stricken] F, strooken Q, stricken Q 1. 288. So] F; Thus Q 1, Q.

274. usurp] let them usurp. Compare *Pericles*, III. ii. 82: "Death may usurp on nature many hours."

280. false fire] used of fire-works, blank-discharge of firearms, a fire or night-signal made to deceive an enemy. See *A New Eng. Dictionary* under *False* 14 b, and under *Fire* 8 a.

285-288. Why . . . away] Dyce:

"In all probability a quotation from some ballad."

289. forest of feathers] So Chapman, *Monsieur D'Olive*, III. i.: "I carry a whole forest of feathers with me." Feathers were much worn on the stage; in Randolph's *The Muses' Looking-Glass*, I. i., Bird, the featherman, has the custom of the players for all their feathers.

if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me— 290  
with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes,  
get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

*Hor.* Half a share.

*Ham.* A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear, 295

This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very—pajock.

*Hor.* You might have rhymed.

291. *two*] F, omitted; *razed*] *raz'd* Q, *rac'd* F. 292. *sir*] F, omitted Q. 298. *pajock*] Ff 3, 4; *paiock* Qq 2-5; *Paiocke* F 1, Q 6; *Pajocke* F 2.

290. *turn Turk*] prove renegade, or turn cruel. See *Much Ado*, III. iv. 57.

291. *Provincial roses*] rosettes of ribbon, like the roses of Provence, or else of Provins (forty miles from Paris), which was celebrated for its roses. "Cotgrave gives both: 'Rose de Provence. The Province rose, the double Damaske Rose,' and 'Rose de Provins, the ordinarie double red Rose.' Gerarde, in his *Herbal*, says that the damask rose is called by some 'Rosa provincialis'" (Clar. Press).

291. *razed*] slashed, or streaked in patterns. Stubbes, *Anatomic of Abuses*, writes of shoes "razed, carved, cut, and stitched over with silk." Clar. Press quotes Randle Holme, *Academy of Armory*, III. i. p. 14, "Pinked or raised Shooes have the over leathers grain part cut into Roses, or other devices."

292. *cry*] company; transferred from the meaning pack of hounds. Cotgrave, 1611: "*Meute*, a kennell, or crie, of hounds." Cleveland, *The London Lady*, 35: "a small Cry of Tenants."

293. *share*] Malone: "The whole receipts of each theatre were divided into shares, of which the proprietors

of the theatre, or *house-keepers* . . . had some; and each actor had one or more shares or part of a share, according to his merit." See Furness for citation of documents from Halliwell.

294. *I*] A whole one, say I. Malone conjectured "A whole one, ay," and several editors adopt the suggestion, "I" and "ay" being both represented in print by "I."

298. *pajock*] Hamlet again probably quotes from some ballad, substituting "pajock" for the rhyming "ass." Q 1676 gave *paiock*; Q 1695, *peacock*; Pope and many editors, *peacock*. Dyce says he has heard the lower classes of the north of Scotland call the peacock the *pea-jock* (cf. bubbly-jock, turkey). The peacock had an unenviable reputation in popular belief and current natural history. He was vain, loved not his young, was inordinately lustful, swallowed his own ordure, had "the voice of a feend, the head of a serpent, and the pace of a theefe." Theobald proposed *paddock*, a toad, and *puttock*, a ravenous kite. Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (p. 636, *Globe* ed.), uses *patchocke* for a clown, and perhaps this is Hamlet's word.

*Ham.* O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word 300  
for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning?

*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the 305  
recorders!—

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music!

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Guil.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with 310  
you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guil.* The king, sir,—

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guil.* Is in his retirement marvellous distempered. 315

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guil.* No, my lord, rather with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer  
to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put  
him to his purgation would perhaps plunge 320  
him into far more choler.

*Guil.* Good my lord, put your discourse into

303. *poisoning?*] *F*, *poysning*. *Q*. 305. *Ah, ha!*] Jennens, *Ah ha*, *Q*,  
*Oh, ha?* *F*. 309. *Re-enter*] *Q* as here; in *F* after *note him*, line 304.  
317. *rather*] *F*, omitted *Q*. 319. *his doctor*] *F*, *the doctor* *Q*. 321. *far*]  
*F*, omitted *Q*.

306. *recorders*] a kind of flageolet. 320. *purgation*] medicinally purg-  
315. *distempered*] discomposed in ing the body, legally clearing from  
mind. Hamlet takes it up as if imputation of guilt, as in *As You  
mean*ing disordered in body; both *Like It*, v. iv. 45. Hamlet plays on  
senses occur in Shakespeare. the two senses.

some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, sir; pronounce. 325

*Guil.* The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make 330 me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guil.* What, my lord? 335

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased; but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother; therefore no more, but to the matter; my mother, you say,— 340

*Ros.* Then thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

*Ham.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart. 345

*Ros.* She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed.

323. *start*] F, *stare* Q. 333. *of my*] F, of Q. 335. *Guil.*] F, *Ros.* Q.  
337. *answer*] Q, *answers* F. 338. *as you*] Q, *you* F. 343. *astonish*] F, *stonish* Q. 345. *mother's*] Q, *Mother* F; *Impart.*] Q, omitted F.

323. *frame*] order, and used specially of an arrangement of words; T. Spencer, *Logick*, 1628: "This frame contains a proposition negative universall, &c."

332. *pardon*] see I. ii. 56.

335. *Guil.*] Evidently this speech is rightly assigned to Guildenstern by F. He then retires and Rosencrantz tries his hand.

342. *admiration*] wonder, as in I. ii. 192.

*Ham.* We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

*Ros.* My lord, you once did love me. 350

*Ham.* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

*Ros.* Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend. 355

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

*Ros.* How can that be when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

*Ham.* Ay, sir, but "While the grass grows,"—the 360 proverb is something musty.—

*Re-enter Players with recorders.*

Oh, the recorders! let me see one.—To withdraw with you:—why do you go about

351. *So I do*] F, *And do* Q. 353. *surely . . . upon*] Q, *freely . . . of* F. 360. *sir*] Q, omitted F. 361. *Re-enter*] Dyce, Enter one with a Recorder F, Enter the Players with Recorders Q, after line 359. 362. *recorders*] Q, *Recorder* F; see one] Q, see F; a comma after one Q, after see F.

349. *trade*] business, as in *Twelfth Night*, III. i. 83.

351. *pickers and stealers*] hands, which the Church Catechism admonishes us to keep from picking and stealing. A mild oath ("by this hand") found in *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 161. Hamlet wishes to have done with professions of love, and swears "by these rogueish hands."

356. *advancement*] Humouring their conceit that he is ambitious; see II. ii. 260.

360, 361. *the proverb*] Malone quotes the proverb from Whetstone, *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578:

"Whylst grass doth growe, oft sterves the seely steede."

362, 363. *To withdraw with you*] to have a word in private with you. Steevens suggests that Guildenstern has indicated by a gesture his wish for privacy, and that Hamlet's words are interrogative. Mason proposed "So, withdraw you," or "So, withdraw will you?" Staunton takes the words as addressed to the players, and suggests "So (*taking a recorder*) withdraw with you." For the use of the infinitive compare "to draw" in III. iv. 216.



to recover the wind of me, as if you would  
drive me into a toil? 365

*Guil.* O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love  
is too unmannerly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that. Will you  
play upon this pipe?

*Guil.* My lord, I cannot. 370

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me, I cannot.

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Guil.* I know no touch of it, my lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventages 375  
with your finger and thumb, give it breath with  
your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent  
music. Look you, these are the stops.

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance  
of harmony; I have not the skill. 380

*Ham.* Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing  
you make of me! You would play upon me;  
you would seem to know my stops; you would  
pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would  
sound me from my lowest note to the top of 385  
my compass; and there is much music, excel-  
lent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you

375. 'Tis] F, It is Q. 376. finger] F, fingers Q; and thumb] F, & the  
umber Q. 377. eloquent] Q, excellent F. 385. the top of] F, omitted Q.

364. to recover the wind of me] 366, 367. O . . . unmannerly] a  
Madden, *The Diary of Master Wil-* duty perhaps too bold may have  
*liam Silence*, p. 33, note: "In order forced my love to express itself ill.  
to drive a deer into the toils, it was Or perhaps—as Clar. Press suggests—  
needful to get to the windward of him, "an unmeaning compliment."  
so that, having you in the wind, he 375. ventages] vents, holes.  
might break in the opposite direction."

make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret 390 me, you cannot play upon me.—

*Re-enter* POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in 395 shape of a camel?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or like a whale? 400

*Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then will I come to my mother by and by.—

[*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent.

—I will come by and by.

*Pol.* I will say so.

[*Exit.* 405]

*Ham.* "By and by" is easily said.—Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

388. *speak*] Q, omitted F; 'Sblood] Q, *Why* F; I] Q, *that* I F. 390, 391. *can fret me*] Q 1, F; *fret me not* Q. 391. *you*] Q, F; *yet you* Q 1, Globe, Cambridge. 395. *yonder*] Q, *that* F. 396. *of*] Q, *like* F. 397. 'tis like] Q 4, 'tis, like Q, it's like F. 399. *backed*] Q, F; *black* Qq 4-6. 402. *will* I] F, *I will* Q. 403-406.] Speeches distributed as in F; Q omits the distribution, and the Exit of Polonius; the Exeunt, line 406, is omitted Q, F.

390. *fret*] Playing on "fret," to irritate and "fret," the piece of gut, metal, or wood which regulates the fingering on certain stringed instruments. 398, 399. *weasel*] Capell transposed the camel and the weasel, to provide a hump for the second animal. Pope, reading with the later Qq *black* for

*backed*, substituted *ouze* for *weasel*, which Theobald approved, noting that "there is humour in comparing the same cloud to a beast, a bird, and a fish."

402. *by and by*] immediately, as often in Shakespeare.

403. *bent*] see II. ii. 30.

406. *Leave me, friends*] follows *by and by* (line 404) in Q.

'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes  
out

Contagion to this world; now could I drink hot  
blood,

And do such bitter business as the day 410

Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my  
mother.

O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;

Let me be cruel, not unnatural:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none; 415

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;

How in my words soever she be shent,

To give them seals never, my soul, consent!

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter* KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

*King.* I like him not, nor stands it safe with us  
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare  
you;

I your commission will forthwith dispatch,

And he to England shall along with you;

The terms of our estate may not endure 5

408. *breathes*] F, *breaks* Q. 410. *bitter . . . day*] F, *business as the*  
*bitter day* Q, *better day* Warburton. 411. *Soft! now*] *soft, now* Q, *Soft*  
*now*, F. 415. *daggers*] F, *dagger* Q. 417. *soever*] Q 6, *somever* Q, F.

413. *Nero*] The murderer of his mother, Agrippina. See *King John*, v. ii. 152. Perhaps the coincidences are accidental, that Agrippina was the wife of Claudius, was accused of poisoning a husband, and of living in incest with a brother.  
417. *shent*] rebuked, as in *Merry Wives*, I. iv. 38.

Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow  
Out of his lunacies.

*Guil.*

We will ourselves provide.

Most holy and religious fear it is  
To keep those many many bodies safe  
That live and feed upon your majesty. 10

*Ros.*

The single and peculiar life is bound  
With all the strength and armour of the mind  
To keep itself from noyance; but much more  
That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests  
The lives of many. The cease of majesty 15  
Dies not alone, but like a gulf doth draw  
What's near it with it; it is a massy wheel,  
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,  
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things  
Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls, 20  
Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone  
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

*King.* Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;

6. *near us*] Q 1676, Pope; *neer's* Q; *dangerous* F and many editors. 7.  
*lunacies*] F, *browes* Q, *lunes* Theobald, *braves* Anon. 14. *whose weal*] Q,  
*whose spirit* F. 15. *cease*] F, *cesse* Q. 17. *it is*] F, *or it is* Q.  
22. *ruin*] F, *raine* Q. 23. *with*] F, omitted Q.

7. *lunacies*] The Q *brows* may be right. The word *brow* is used in the sense of fronting aspect, countenance, and also in that of confidence, effrontery; see *A New English Dictionary*, *brow*, 5 c and d. The choice of the word may have been determined by the fixed gaze of Hamlet upon the King during the play-scene. It seems strange that *blows* (in the sense of injuries, not uncommon in Shakespeare) has not been suggested as an emendation of *brows*.

9. *many many*] Ff 2-4 read *many*.

Rolfe compares *King John*, I. i. 183: "many a many foot of land," and Clar. Press, *Henry V.* IV. ii. 33: "A very little little let us do."

11. *single and peculiar*] individual and private.

13. *noyance*] hurt, injury.

15. *cease*] cessation; cease of majesty, death of a king. Pope substituted "decease" for "the cease."

16. *gulf*] whirlpool, as in *King Richard III.* III. vii. 128.

24. *Arm you*] prepare yourselves, as in *Mid. Night's Dream*, I. i. 117.

For we will fetters put upon this fear, 25  
Which now goes too free-footed.

*Ros., Guil.* We will haste us.  
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* My lord, he's going to his mother's closet;  
Behind the arras I'll convey myself  
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him  
home;

And, as you said, and wisely was it said, 30  
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,  
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear  
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my  
liege;

I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,  
And tell you what I know.

*King.* Thanks, dear my lord 35  
[*Exit Polonius.*

Oh, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;  
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,  
A brother's murder! Pray can I not,  
Though inclination be as sharp as will:

25. *upon*] F, *about* Q. 26. *Ros., Guil.*] Both F, *Ros. Q.* 33. *speech,*  
*of vantage*] comma inserted by Theobald. 39. *will*:] F, *will*, Q.

33. *of vantage*] from a point or position of vantage. Many editors do not insert the comma before "of vantage." Hudson explains "speech of vantage," a speech having the advantage of such partiality as a mother bears to a son or a son to a mother.

38.] Hanmer needlessly emends the metre by inserting "alas!" after

"Pray." Walker suggests "murderer."

39. *will*] An ingenious gentleman suggested "'twill" to Theobald, which some editors have adopted. Warburton read "th'ill." The King means that his effort to pray was no reluctant resolve; his desire accompanied his act of will.

My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent, 40  
 And, like a man to double business bound,  
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,  
 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand,  
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,  
 Is not there rain enough in the sweet heavens 45  
 To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves  
 mercy

But to confront the visage of offence?  
 And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,  
 To be forestalled ere we come to fall,  
 Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up; 50  
 My fault is past. But, oh, what form of prayer  
 Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul  
 murder?"

That cannot be, since I am still possess'd  
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,  
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen. 55  
 May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?  
 In the corrupted currents of this world  
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,  
 And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself  
 Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above; 60  
 There, is no shuffling; there, the action lies  
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd  
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults

50. *pardon'd*] F, *pardon* Q. 52. *murder?*] Caldecott, *murther*, Q.  
*murther*. F. 58. *shove by*] F, *showe by* Q.

57. *currents*] courses. Dyce and ii. 368. Occurrents had been sug-  
 Furness accept Walker's suggestion gested in 1752.

"currents" for occurrents; see v. 61. *lies*] Clar. Press: "used in its  
 legal sense."



To give in evidence. What then? what rests?

Try what repentance can: what can it not? 65

Yet what can it when one can not repent?

O wretched state! O bosom black as death!

O limed soul, that struggling to be free

Art more engaged! Help, angels! make assay!

Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of  
steel, 70

Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!

All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;

And now I'll do't; and so he goes to heaven;

And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd: 75

A villain kills my father; and for that,

I, his sole son, do this same villain send

To heaven.

Oh, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

He took my father grossly, full of bread, 80

With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;

And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?

72. *Retires* . . .] Malone, omitted Q, F; hee kneels Q 1. 73. *it pat*,  
*now he is praying*] F, *it, but now a is praying* Q. 77. *sole*] Q, *foule*  
F, *fool*, Capell conject. 79. *Oh*] F, *Why* Q; *hire and salary*] F, *base*  
*and silly* Q. 81. *With all*] F, *Withall* Q; *flush*] Q, *fresh* F.

68. *limed*] caught, as with bird-lime. be addressed not to the angels but to the King's own soul.

69. *engaged*] entangled. So Florio, *Montaigne*: "The Barble fishes, if one of them chance to be engaged." 75. *would be scann'd*] ought to be examined.

69. *assay*] trial; but *assay* is used by Shakespeare, *King Henry V.* i. xvi. 49: "pride, fulness of bread."

ii. 151, for an onset, attack, and perhaps that is the meaning here. It is suggested that "make assay" may 81. *broad blown*] see the Ghost's words, i. v. 76; *flush*, lusty; full of life; "flush youth," *Ant. and Cleop.* i. iv. 52.

But in our circumstance and course of thought  
 'Tis heavy with him; and am I then revenged,  
 To take him in the purging of his soul, 85  
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?  
 No.

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent;  
 When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,  
 Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed, 90  
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act  
 That has no relish of salvation in't;  
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven  
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black  
 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays.— 95  
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*  
*King.* [*Rising.*] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below;  
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [*Exit.*

#### SCENE IV.—*The Queen's Closet.*

*Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look you lay home to him;

89. *drunk asleep*] F, *drunke, a sleepe* Q. 91. *gaming, swearing*] F,  
*game a swearing* Q, *game swearing* Q 1, *game, a-swearing* Cambridge.  
 97. *Rising*] omitted Q, F; *Rises* Capell.

83. *our . . . thought*] our mortal condition and the course of our thought. Or "circumstance" may be connected with "thought," our thought in its indirect indications and its general tendency.

88. *hent*] seizure, grip. The verb is found in *Measure for Measure*, iv. vi. 14, and *Winter's Tale*, iv. iii. 133, meaning seize, take. F 4 has *bent*, followed by several editors. Warburton conjectured *hest*, command. Why has no "ingenious gentleman" suggested *hunt*, pursuit,

and adduced instances of the use of the hunting-sword in breaking-up the quarry?

89-95.] Parallels for Hamlet's "infernal sentiment" can be adduced from other dramas. Thus in Beaumont and Fletcher, *Four Plays in One*; *The Triumph of Death*, sc. v. (with an evident reminiscence from Hamlet):

"'Tis nothing:

No; take him dead-drunk now,  
 without repentance,  
 His lechery in-seam'd upon him."

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear  
with,

And that your grace hath screen'd and stood  
between

Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.

Pray you, be round with him.

*Ham.* [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother! 5

*Queen.* I'll warrant you;

Fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*Polonius hides behind the arras.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now, mother, what's the matter?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended. 10

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet?

*Ham.* What's the matter now?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so:

You are the queen, your husband's brother's  
wife; 15

4. *silence me e'en*] F, *silence me even* Q, 'sconce me e'en Warburton, *sconce me even* Hanmer. 5. *Ham. . . . mother*] F, omitted Q. 6. *warrant*] F, wait Q. Polonius hides . . .] omitted Q, F; so with stage directions, line 24, line 25. 12. *a wicked*] Q, *an idle* F.

4. *silence*] Several editors adopt Hanmer's *sconce*. Cf. *Merry Wives*, III. iii. 96: "I will ensconce me behind the arras." Clar. Press reads *sconce* because it is supported by Q 1; "He shrowde my selfe behinde the arras." The "foolish prating knave" Polonius, can be "most still" only in death; his resolve "to silence himself" may have an ironical relation to the occasion of his death, his loud "What, ho!" 5. *round*] see II. ii. 139.

And—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

*Queen.* Nay then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;

You go not till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

*Queen.* What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!

*Pol. [Behind.]* What, ho! help, help, help!

*Ham. [Drawing.]* How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead! *[Makes a pass through the arras.]*

*Pol. [Behind.]* Oh, I am slain! *[Falls and dies.]*

*Queen.* Oh me, what hast thou done? 25

*Ham.* Nay, I know not; is it the king?

*Queen.* Oh, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

*Ham.* A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

*Queen.* As kill a king?

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word.— 30

*[Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.]*

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.—

Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall 35

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

16. *And . . . you*] Q (no parenthesis, comma after so); *But would you were not so.* You F. 20. *inmost*] F, *most* Q. 22. *Help, help, ho!*] F, *Helpe how.* Q. 23. *What, ho! . . . help!*] F, *What how helpe* Q. 24. *Makes . . . arras*] Capell, omitted Q, F. 25. *Behind*] omitted Q, F; *Falls and dies*] Killes Polonius F, omitted Q. 30. *king?*] F, *king.* Q; stage direction omitted Q, F; *'twas*] F, *it was* Q. 32. *better*] Q, *bettters* F.

If damned custom have not braz'd it so  
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

*Queen.* What have I done that thou darest wag thy tongue  
In noise so rude against me?

*Ham.* Such an act 40  
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,  
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose  
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,  
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows  
As false as dicers' oaths; oh, such a deed 45  
As from the body of contraction plucks  
The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
A rhapsody of words; heaven's face doth glow,  
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,  
With tristful visage, as against the doom, 50  
Is thought-sick at the act.

*Queen.* Ay me, what act,  
That roars so loud and thunders in the index?

37. *braz'd*] F, *braz'd* Q, *braz'd* Globe. 38 *is*] F, *be* Q. 44. *sets*] Q,  
makes F. 48. *doth*] F, *does* Q. 48, 49. *glow*, *Yea*] F, *glowe* Ore Q.  
50. *tristful*] F, *heated* Q. 51, 52. *Ay . . . index*] given to the Queen F;  
*Ay . . . act*? given to Queen; *That roars*, &c., to Hamlet Q.

37. *braz'd*] hardened like brass. So  
Armin, *Nest of Ninnies*, 1608: "I am  
brazed by your favours, made bold in  
your ostended curtesies."

38. *proof and bulwark*] armour of  
proof and rampart against sense, that  
is, feeling. For *proof* compare *Mac-*  
*beth*, I. ii. 54: "Bellona's bridegroom  
lapp'd in proof." Clar. Press takes  
"proof" and "bulwark" as adjectives.

44. *sets a blister*] Clar. Press:  
"brands as a harlot." Compare iv.  
v. 117, and *Comedy of Errors*, II. ii.  
138.

46. *contraction*] act of contracting,  
specially of the marriage-contract.

Hakluyt, *Voyages*, 1598: "The  
mutual contraction of a perpetuall  
league." Cotton Mather, *Magnalia*  
*Christi*, 1702: "After his 'con-  
traction' . . . unto the daughter of  
Mr. Wilson."

49. *this solidity*] the earth.

50. *tristful*] sorrowful, as in 1  
*Henry IV.* II. iv. 433: *doom*, *dooms-*  
*day*.

51. *thought-sick*] see III. i. 85.

52 *index*] prelude; the index or  
"table" was usually placed at the  
beginning of books. So *Othello*, II. i.  
263: "an index and obscure pro-  
logue."

*Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this;  
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.  
 See what a grace was seated on this brow; 55  
 Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,  
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;  
 A station like the herald Mercury  
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;  
 A combination and a form indeed, 60  
 Where every god did seem to set his seal  
 To give the world assurance of a man:  
 This was your husband. Look you now, what  
 follows:  
 Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,  
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes? 65  
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
 And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?  
 You cannot call it love, for at your age  
 The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,  
 And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment 70

55. *this*] Q, *his* F. 57. *and*] Q, or F. 65. *brother*] Q, *breath* F.

53. *Look here,*] Restoration actors made Hamlet produce two miniatures; but miniatures could hardly represent Hamlet's father at full-length, as he is described. A print, prefixed to Rowe's ed. of *Hamlet*, 1709, exhibits half-lengths hanging on the wall. The actor Holman had a picture of Claudius on the wall, and a miniature of the dead king produced from Hamlet's bosom. Fechter had two miniatures, one worn round Gertrude's neck, the other by Hamlet; he tore the miniature from Gertrude and flung it away; so Rossi, who stamped upon it. Edwin Booth

used two miniatures. Sir H. Irving and Salvini have represented the portraits as seen only by the mind's eye.

54. *counterfeit presentment*] portrayed representation. Compare "Fair Portia's counterfeit," *Merchant of Venice*, III. ii. 116.

58. *station*] attitude in standing, as in *Ant. and Cleop.* III. iii. 22.

59.] Malone conjectured that this image was caught from Phæar's *Æneid*, IV. 246, Mercury arriving on Atlas.

67. *batten*] feed gluttonously. *Coriolanus*, IV. v. 35: "batten on cold bits."



Would step from this to this? Sense sure you  
have,

Else could you not have motion; but sure, that  
sense

Is apoplex'd; for madness would not err,  
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd  
But it reserved some quantity of choice, 75

To serve in such a difference. What devil was't  
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?  
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,  
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,  
Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80  
Could not so mope.

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,  
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,  
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax  
And melt in her own fire; proclaim no shame 85  
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,  
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,  
And reason panders will.

*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more;  
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,

71. *step*] Q, F; *stoop* Collier MS., and MS. in Ingleby's copy of Q 1637.  
71-76. *Sense . . . difference*] Q, omitted F. 78-81. *Eyes . . . mope*] Q,  
omitted F. 88. *And*] Q, *As* F; *panders*] F, *pardons* Q. 89. *eyes*  
. . . *very*] F, *very eyes into my* Q.

71, 72. *Sense . . . motion*] sense, feeling; motion, impulse, desire, as frequently in Shakespeare.

74. *ecstasy*] madness, as in II. i. 102.

75. *quantity*] portion; used sometimes by Shakespeare contemptuously for a small portion or anything diminutive, as in *King John*, v. iv. 23.

77. *hoodman-blind*] blind-man's buff. Singer quotes Baret's *Alvearie*: "The Hoodwinke play, or hoodman-blind, in some places called the blind-manbuff."

81. *mope*] be stupid, as in *Tempest*, v. i. 239.

83. *mutine*] mutiny. Cotgrave: "Mutiner, to mutine."

And there I see such black and grained spots 90  
As will not leave their tinct.

*Ham.* Nay, but to live  
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,  
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love  
Over the nasty sty,—

*Queen.* O, speak to me no more;  
These words like daggers enter in mine ears; 95  
No more, sweet Hamlet!

*Ham.* A murderer and a villain;  
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe  
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;  
A cut-purse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, 100  
And put it in his pocket!

*Queen.* No more!

*Ham.* A king of shreds and patches—

*Enter GHOST.*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,  
You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious  
figure?

*Queen.* Alas, he's mad! 105

90. *grained*] F, *greeced* Q. 91. *not leave*] F, *leave there* Q. 94 *sty,—*  
*sty.* Q, F. 95. *mine*] F, *my* Q. 102. *patches—*] Rowe, *patches*, Q,  
*patches.* F. 103. *Enter Ghost.*] before line 102 Q, F; *Enter the Ghost in*  
*his night gowne* Q 1. 104. *your*] Q, *you* F.

90. *grained*] dyed in grain. 98. *vice*] the vice of the old  
92. *enseamed*] loaded with grease. moralities was commonly a mis-  
French, *enseimer* (now *ensimer*). *New*chievous buffoon; he wore sometimes  
*English Dictionary*: "The French the parti-coloured dress of a fool,  
word is now used only in sense 'to whence, Dyce supposes, "a king of  
grease cloth,' whence perhaps the shreds and patches."  
fig. use in Shaks." See note on III.  
iii. 89-95.

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by  
The important acting of your dread command?  
Oh, say!

*Ghost.* Do not forget: this visitation 110  
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
But look, amazement on thy mother sits;  
Oh, step between her and her fighting soul;  
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:  
Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Ham.* How is it with you, lady? 115

*Queen.* Alas, how is't with you,  
That you do bend your eye on vacancy  
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?  
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;  
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm, 120  
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,  
Starts up and stands an end. O gentle son,  
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper  
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

*Ham.* On him, on him! Look you, how pale he  
glares! 125

117. *you do*] Q, *you* F. 118. *the incorporal*] Q, *their corporall* F.  
122. *Starts . . . stands*] Q 4, *Start . . . stand* Q, F.

107. *lapsed . . . passion*] Johnson:  
"having suffered time to slip and pas-  
sion to cool." Rolfe: "having let time  
slip by while indulging in mere pas-  
sion." Schmidt (guided by the use of  
*lapsed* in *Twelfth Night*, III. iii. 36):  
"surprised by you in a time and passion  
fit for the execution of your command."  
Collier MS. has "fume" for "time."

108. *important*] urgent, as in *All's*  
*Well*, III. vii. 21.

112. *amazement*] bewilderment, as  
in *Measure for Measure*, IV. ii. 220.

114. *Conceit*] imagination, as in II.  
ii. 593.

121. *excrements*] outgrowths; used  
especially of hair, nails, feathers; used  
of the beard in *Merchant of Venice*,  
III. ii. 87. Rowe read *hairs*, and is  
followed by several editors.

122. *an end*] see I. v. 19.

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,  
Would make them capable.—Do not look upon  
me,

Lest with this piteous action you convert  
My stern effects; then what I have to do  
Will want true colour; tears perchance for  
blood. 130

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there?

*Queen.* Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!

My father, in his habit as he lived! 135

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit Ghost.*]

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your brain;

This bodiless creation ecstasy

Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy?

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time, 140

And makes as healthful music; it is not madness

That I have utter'd; bring me to the test,

And I the matter will re-word, which madness

Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,

129. *effects*] Q, F; *affects*, Singer. 131. *whom*] Q, *who* F. 139.  
*Ecstasy?*] F, omitted Q.

127. *capable*] susceptible, as in III.  
li. 14.

129. *effects*] action, as in *Venus and  
Adonis*, 605, and *Lear*, II. iv. 182.  
Singer's proposal *affects*, affections of  
the mind, is perhaps right.

135. *his habit*] Q 1 directs that the  
Ghost shall appear in his night-gown,  
that is, dressing-gown.

138. *ecstasy*] see II. i. 102.

I lay not that flattering unction to your soul, 145  
 That not your trespass but my madness speaks;  
 It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
 Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,  
 Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;  
 Repent what's past, avoid what is to come; 150  
 And do not spread the compost on the weeds,  
 To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue,  
 For in the fatness of these pursy times  
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,  
 Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good. 155

*Queen.* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,  
 And live the purer with the other half.  
 Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;  
 Assume a virtue, if you have it not. 160  
 That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,  
 Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,  
 That to the use of actions fair and good  
 He likewise gives a frock or livery,  
 That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night, 165

145. *that*] Q, a F. 148. *Whilst*] F, *Whiles* Q. 151. *on*] Q, or F,  
*d'er Caldecott.* 152. *ranker*] Q, *ranke* F. 153. *these*] Q, *this* F.  
155. *curb*] Q, *courb* F. 158. *live*] F, *leau* Q. 159. *mine*] F, *my* Q.  
161-165. *That . . . put on*] Q, omitted F. 161, 162. *eat, Of habits devil,*  
Q 6, *eate Of habits deuill* Q. 165. *on. Refrain to-night*] Q 6 (with semi-  
colon after *on*), *on to refraine night* Q.

152. *Forgive*] Staunton regards these words to the close of the speech as addressed to "my virtue," and marks them "aside"; but how does this agree with virtue begging pardon of vice? Evidently the words are spoken to his mother.

155. *curb*] The modern spelling of F *courb*, French *courber*, to bow or bend. Drummond of Hawthornden, *Cypress Grove*: "bodies languishing and curbing."  
161-165.] With the pointing above, no emendation is required: Custom, who destroys all sensibility, the evil spirit of our habits, is yet an angel in this, etc. The emendation suggested by Thirlby to Theobald "of habits

And that shall lend a kind of easiness  
 To the next abstinence; the next more easy;  
 For use almost can change the stamp of nature,  
 And either master the devil, or throw him out  
 With wondrous potency. Once more, good night;  
 And when you are desirous to be bless'd, 171  
 I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*]

I do repent; but heaven hath pleased it so,  
 To punish me with this, and this with me,  
 That I must be their scourge and minister. 175  
 I will bestow him, and will answer well  
 The death I gave him.—So, again, good night.  
 I must be cruel, only to be kind;  
 Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.  
 One word more, good lady.

*Queen.*

What shall I do? 180

*Ham.* Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:

Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;

Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;

167–170. *the next more . . . potency*] Q, omitted F. 169. *And . . . the*] Jennens, Steevens (1785), Dyce (ed. 2), Furness; *And either the* Qq 2, 3; *And Maister the* Q 4. 179. *Thus*] F, *This* Q. 180. *One . . . lady*] Q, omitted F. 182. *bloat*] Warburton, *blowt* Q, *blunt* F.

evil" is plausible; but it effaces the opposition of "angel" to "devil." Staunton reads "eat, Oft habits' devil"; Grant White, "eat of habit's evil"; Johnson, "eat Of habits, devil." Clar. Press notes: "The double meaning of the word 'habits' suggested the frock or livery."

169. *And either master*] Q omits the verb; Q 4 omits *either* and inserts *master*. Several editors follow Q 4. Pope and Capell, "And master even" (or ev'n); Malone, "And either

curb." Quell, lay, shame, and other verbs have been proposed. "Master" may be derived from the early stage, and has somewhat more authority than any other word.

178, 179.] Delius supposes that the lines are spoken aside.

183. *mouse*] a pet name, as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 19; Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*: "pleasant names may be invented, bird, mouse, lamb, pus, pigeon, &c."



And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,  
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd  
fingers, 185

Make you to ravel all this matter out,  
That I essentially am not in madness,  
But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him  
know;

For who that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,  
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib, 190  
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?  
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,  
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,  
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,  
To try conclusions, in the basket creep, 195  
And break your own neck down.

*Queen.* Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,  
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe  
What thou hast said to me.

*Ham.* I must to England; you know that?

*Queen.* Alack, 200

I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

188. *craft*. 'Twere] F, *craft*, 'twere Q. 195. *conclusions, in the basket*] F  
3, no pointing in Q, comma only after *basket* F. 200. *that?*] F, *that*. Q.

184. *reechy*] another form of *reeky*, smoky; hence foul; but reek is also used to mean emit vapour, commonly malodorous, and perhaps the word may mean stinking. We have "reeky shanks and yellow chapless skulls" in *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. i. 83.

190. *paddock*] toad, as in *Macbeth*, i. i. 9.

190. *gib*] tom-cat; so "gib-cat," *1 Henry IV*, i. ii. 83. Clar. Press notes: "The toad, bat, and cat were supposed to be familiars of witches and acquainted with their mistresses' secrets." Perhaps the ideas of venom, blindness, and lust are suggested. 193-196] The famous ape is now unknown. Warner suggests that Suckling alludes to the forgotten story in a letter, where he speaks of the jackanapes and the partridges; but Suckling's jackanapes, though he lets out the partridges, does not break his neck. 195. *try conclusions*] try experiments, as in *Lucrece*, 1160. 200. *England*] How Hamlet had learnt this is left untold.

*Ham.* There's letters seal'd; and my two school-fellows,  
 Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,  
 They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,  
 And marshal me to knavery. Let it work; 205  
 For 'tis the sport to have the engineer  
 Hoist with his own petar; and 't shall go hard  
 But I will delve one yard below their mines,  
 And blow them at the moon; oh, 'tis most sweet  
 When in one line two crafts directly meet. 210  
 This man shall set me packing;  
 I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.  
 Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor  
 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,  
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave.— 215  
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.—  
 Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; Hamlet dragging in Polonius.*]

202-210. *There's . . . meet*] Q, omitted F. 207. *and't*] Theobald, *an't* Q. 213. *good night. Indeed*] F, *good night indeed*, Q. 215. *foolish*] Q 1, F; *most foolish* Q. 217. *Exeunt . . .*] Steevens; Exit Q; Exit Hamlet tugging in Polonius F; Exit Hamlet with the dead body Q 1.

206. *engineer*] constructor of military works; accent on *en*, as in *Othello*, II. i. 65. Compare *pioneer*, I. v. 163.

207. *Hoist*] Shakespeare has both the forms *hoise* and *hoist*, to either of which forms of the verb this may belong.

207. *petar*] Clar. Press quotes

Cotgrave: "Petart: a Petard or Petarre; an Engine . . . wherewith strong gates are burst open."

211. *packing*] Schmidt: departing in a hurry. Clar. Press: contriving, plotting, with a play on the other sense. "Pack" occurs in both senses in Shakespeare.

## ACT IV

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and  
GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* There's matter in these sighs; these profound  
heaves

You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.  
Where is your son?

*Queen.* Bestow this place on us a little while.

*[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]*

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night! 5

*King.* What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

*Queen.* Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend  
Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,  
Behind the arras hearing something stir,  
Whips out his rapier, cries, "A rat, a rat!" 10  
And in this brainish apprehension kills  
The unseen good old man.

*King.* O heavy deed!

It had been so with us had we been there;  
His liberty is full of threats to all,  
To you yourself, to us, to every one. 15

*Enter . . . Guldenstern]* substantially Q, *Enter King F.* 1. *matter]* Q, *matters F.* 1, 2. *There's . . . translate]* F has full stop after *sighs*, Q has comma after *sighs*, *heaves*, and *translate*. 4. *Bestow . . . while]* Q, omitted F. *Exeunt . . .]* omitted Q, F. 5. *my good]* F, *mine own Q;* *to-night !]* Hanmer; *to-night ? Q, F.* 7. *sea]* Q, *seas F.* 10. *Whips . . . cries]* Q, *He whips his Rapier out, and cries F.* 11. *this]* Q, *his F.*

11. *brainish]* headstrong, passion- "Braynisshe, hedy, selfe  
ate. Palsgrave, *Lesclarcissement*, 1530: *wylled.*"

Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?  
 It will be laid to us, whose providence  
 Should have kept short, restrain'd and out of haunt,  
 This mad young man; but so much was our love,  
 We would not understand what was most fit, 20  
 But, like the owner of a foul disease,  
 To keep it from divulging, let it feed  
 Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

*Queen.* To draw apart the body he hath kill'd;  
 O'er whom his very madness, like some ore 25  
 Among a mineral of metals base,  
 Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

*King.* O Gertrude, come away!  
 The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch  
 But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed 30  
 We must, with all our majesty and skill,  
 Both countenance and excuse.—Ho! Guildenstern!

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Friends both, go join you with some further aid;  
 Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,  
 And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd  
 him: 35

22. *let*] Q, *let's* F. 31. *must*] F, *most* Q.

18. *kept short*] So in Florio's *Montaigne*: "When his soldiers were nearest unto their enemies he restrained and kept them very short" (II. 34).

18. *haunt*] resort, as in *As You Like It*, II. i. 15.

25. *ore*] Schmidt gives no meaning for *ore* in Shakespeare except "a vein of gold." Clar. Press; "in the

English-French Dictionary appended to Cotgrave *ore* is confined to gold." Walker proposed and Furness reads "like fine ore."

26. *mineral*] Malone: "Minsheu defines 'mineral' to be 'anything that grows in mines and contains metals.'" It is used in Hall's *Satires*, b. vi. for mine.

Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body  
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.—

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends  
And let them know both what we mean to do,  
And what's untimely done: [so, haply, slander,] 40  
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,  
As level as the cannon to his blank  
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name  
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!  
My soul is full of discord and dismay. 45

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Safely stowed.

*Ros., Guil.* [Within.] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

*Ham.* But soft, what noise? who calls on Hamlet?

O, here they come.

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Ros.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead  
body? 5

39. *And let* Q, *To let* F. 40–44.] see note below.

*Scene II.*

*Enter Hamlet* F; *Enter Hamlet, Rosencraus, and others* Q. 2. *Ros.*  
*Guil.* [Within.] *Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!* substantially F, omitted Q. 3. *But*  
*soft,* Q, omitted F. 4. *Enter . . .* F, omitted Q.

40. *so haply slander* F omits all between *done* and *O*, line 44; Q reads: "And what's vntimely doone, Whose whisper."

Theobald suggested "Happily, slander," or *rumour*, and read "For, haply, slander." Capell read as above, and is followed by many editors. Malone 1790: "So viperous slander." Staunton suggested "thus calumny."

42. *blank* the white spot in the centre of a target; mark. Compare *Othello*, III. iv. 128.

*Ham.* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Ros.* Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence  
and bear it to the chapel.

*Ham.* Do not believe it. 10

*Ros.* Believe what?

*Ham.* That I can keep your counsel and not mine  
own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge,  
what replication should be made by the son  
of a king? 15

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Ham.* Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance,  
his rewards, his authorities. But such officers  
do the king best service in the end; he keeps  
them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; 20  
first mouthed, to be last swallowed; when he  
needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeez-  
ing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry  
again.

*Ros.* I understand you not, my lord. 25

*Ham.* I am glad of it; a knavish speech sleeps in  
a foolish ear.

7. *Compounded*] F, *Compound* Q. 13. *sponge*,] Q, F; *spunge*!—  
Steevens; *spunge*! Caldecott. 20. *like an ape*] F, *like an apple* Q, as  
an Ape doth nuttes Q I, *like an ape, an apple* Farmer conject.

7. *Compounded*] The Q *Compound* may be right, as an imperative. So 1. ii. (opening) "Counsaille; as Polonius." *2 Henry IV.* iv. v. 116.

12. *keep your counsel*] Hamlet knows of the commission to England. Or perhaps the reference is to his not betraying their confession that they had been sent for by the King. See II. ii. 305. Possibly there is a play on the word *counsel* meaning councillor, as elsewhere in Shakespeare. See stage direction in Q I,

13. *sponge*] The same image was used, in nearly the same way, by Vespasian, as recorded by Suetonius. Caldecott quotes from R. C.'s *Henr. Steph. Apology for Herodotus*, 1608, and Barnabe Riche, *Faultes, faults*, 1606, in illustration of the image. Steevens quotes Marston, *Satires*, vii. 17. *countenance*] patronage, favour, as in *2 Henry IV.* iv. ii. 13.



*Ros.* My lord, you must tell us where the body is,  
and go with us to the king.

*Ham.* The body is with the king, but the king is 30  
not with the body. The king is a thing—

*Guil.* "A thing," my lord?

*Ham.* Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox,  
and all after. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

*Enter KING, attended.*

*King.* I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.  
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!  
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:  
He's loved of the distracted multitude,  
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes; 5  
And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,  
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,  
This sudden sending him away must seem

31. *a thing*—] *F*, *a thing*. *Q*. 33, 34. *Hide . . . after*] *F*, omitted *Q*.

*Scene III.*

7. *never*] *Q*, *neerer* *F*.

30, 31. *The body . . . thing*—] *Clar.* Press: "Hamlet is talking nonsense designedly." He wishes to baffle the courtiers, and have a private meaning, as often before. He has just called himself "the son of a king"; he has seen his father in his own castle. To the courtiers his words are nonsense; for himself they mean "the body lies in death with the King my father, but my father walks disembodied." He might have added something, but he is interrupted, and adopting Rosencrantz's meaning of "King," completes his sentence otherwise than intended, yet so as to

express a part of his mind; "the King—as you mean King—is for me a negligible quantity, a thing of nothing." In v. ii. 64. Hamlet speaks of his father as my "king."

33, 34. *Hide fox, and all after*] *Hammer* says that there is a play among children so named. *Dekker, Satiromastix* has: "does play at bo-peep with your grace, and cries—All hid, as boys do." Whether the reference is to a children's game or to a fox-hunt, the meaning seems to be: "The old fox, Polonius, is hidden; come, let us all follow the sport and hunt him out." See App. III.

Deliberate pause; diseases desperate grown  
 By desperate appliance are relieved, 10  
 Or not at all.—

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ.*

How now! what hath befall'n?

*Ros.* Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,  
 We cannot get from him.

*King.* But where is he?

*Ros.* Without, my lord; guarded, to know your  
 pleasure.

*King.* Bring him before us. 15

*Ros.* Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

*Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.*

*King.* Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

*Ham.* At supper.

*King.* At supper? where?

*Ham.* Not where he eats, but where he is eaten; a 20  
 certain convocation of politic worms are e'en  
 at him. Your worm is your only emperor for  
 diet; we fat all creatures else to fat us, and  
 we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king  
 and your lean beggar is but variable service, 25  
 two dishes, but to one table; that's the  
 end.

11. *Enter Rosencrantz*] F, *Enter Rosencraus* and all the rest Q. 16. *Ho,*  
*Guildenstern*] F, *How*, Q; *my lord*] F, *the lord* Q. 21. *politic*] Q,  
 omitted F. 24. *ourselves*] Q, *our self*, F.

21. *politic worms*] such worms as Diet of Worms. W. Hall Griffin  
 might breed in a politician's corpse. adds, "the mention of 'emperor'  
 Singer suggests an allusion to the makes it very probable."

*King.* Alas, alas!

*Ham.* A man may fish with the worm that hath  
eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath 30  
fed of that worm.

*King.* What dost thou mean by this?

*Ham.* Nothing but to show you how a king may  
go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

*King.* Where is Polonius? 35

*Ham.* In heaven; send thither to see; if your  
messenger find him not there, seek him i' the  
other place yourself. But indeed, if you find  
him not within this month, you shall nose  
him as you go up the stairs into the lobby. 40

*King.* [*To some Attendants.*] Go seek him there.

*Ham.* He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

*King.* Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,  
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve  
For that which thou hast done, must send thee hence 45  
With fiery quickness; therefore prepare thyself;  
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,  
The associates tend, and every thing is bent  
For England.

*Ham.* For England?

*King.* Ay, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good.

28-31. *King. Alas . . . worm*] Q, omitted F. 38. *indeed, if*] F, *if indeed* Q.  
by Capell. 39. *within*] Q, omitted F. 41, 42. stage directions inserted  
42. *you*] Q, *ye* F. 43. *deed, for thine*] Q, *deed of thine, for thine* F.  
46. *With fiery quickness*] F, omitted Q. 48. *is bent*] Q, *at bent* F.  
49. *England?*] F, *England.* Q.

34. *progress*] a royal journey of state, as in 2 *Henry VI.* i. iv. 76.

*King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes. 50

*Ham.* I see a cherub that sees them.—But, come ;  
for England !—Farewell, dear mother.

*King.* Thy loving father, Hamlet.

*Ham.* My mother : father and mother is man and  
wife ; man and wife is one flesh, and so, my 55  
mother.—Come, for England ! *[Exit.]*

*King.* Follow him at foot ; tempt him with speed aboard ;  
Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night ;  
Away ! for every thing is seal'd and done  
That else leans on the affair : pray you, make  
haste.— 60

*[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]*

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—  
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,  
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red  
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe  
Pays homage to us,—thou may'st not coldly set 65  
Our sovereign process ; which imports at full,  
By letters conjuring to that effect,  
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England ;  
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,

51. *them*] Q, *him* F. 55. *and so*] F, Q 1 ; *so* Q. 60. *Exeunt . . .*  
Theobald ; omitted Q, F. 67. *conjuring*] F, *congruing* Q.

51. *a cherub*] The cherubim are  
angels of knowledge, and so they see  
the King's purposes.

57. *at foot*] close, at heel.

65. *set*] Pope (ed. 2) read *let*, *i.e.*  
hinder ; Hanmer *set by*. "Coldly  
*set*" is explained by Schmidt "regard  
with indifference." "Set me light,"  
esteem me lightly, occurs in *Sonnets*,  
lxxxviii., and "sets it light" in *King*  
*Richard II.* i. iii. 293.

66. *process*] procedure.

67. *conjuring*] This word, rather  
than Q *congruing*, corresponds with the  
"earnest conjuration" of the do-  
cument, described by Hamlet in v.  
ii. 38. The accent on the first  
syllable is found in *Measure for*  
*Measure*, v. i. 48.

69. *hectic*] Cotgrave has "Ectique  
. . . a fever called Hecticke," and  
"sick of an Heckticke fever."

And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done, 70  
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Plain in Denmark.*

*Enter FORTINBRAS, a Captain and Soldiers, marching.*

*For.* Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king ;  
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras  
Claims the conveyance of a promised march  
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.  
If that his majesty would aught with us, 5  
We shall express our duty in his eye ;  
And let him know so.

*Cap.* I will do't, my lord.

*For.* Go softly on.

[*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*]

*Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and  
others.*

*Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these?

*Cap.* They are of Norway, sir. 10

71. *joys . . . begun*] F, *joys will nere begin* Q.

## Scene IV.

A Plain . . .] Capell ; A Camp Rowe. Enter . . .] Globe ed. Enter Fortinbras with his Army over the stage Q. Enter Fortinbras with an Armie F. 3. *Claims*] F, *Craves* Q. 6. *eye* ;] Collier ; *eye*, Q, F. 8. *softly*] Q, *safely* F. Exeunt . . .] omitted Q, Exit F. Enter . . .] Dyce ; Enter Hamlet, Rosencraus, etc. Q, omitted F. 9-66. *Good sir, . . . worth*] Q, omitted F.

71. *haps*] Johnson suggested and Collier's MS. has "hopes."

## Scene IV.

6. *in his eye*] in his presence ; 8. *softly*] leisurely, slowly, as in Steevens compares *Antony and Cleo- Julius Cæsar*, v. i. 16.

*Ham.* How purposed, sir, I pray you?

*Cap.* Against some part of Poland.

*Ham.* Who commands them, sir?

*Cap.* The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

*Ham.* Goes it against the main of Poland, sir, 15  
Or for some frontier?

*Cap.* Truly to speak, and with no addition,  
We go to gain a little patch of ground  
That hath in it no profit but the name.  
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; 20  
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole  
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

*Ham.* Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

*Cap.* Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

*Ham.* Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats 25  
Will not debate the question of this straw;  
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,  
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without  
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

*Cap.* God be wi' you, sir. [Exit.

*Ros.* Will't please you go, my lord? 30

*Ham.* I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[Exeunt all except Hamlet.]

How all occasions do inform against me,

17. *speak*] Q, *speak it* Pope, *speak, sir* Capell. 24. *'tis*] Pope, *it is* Q.  
30. Exit] omitted Q. 31. Exeunt . . .] omitted Q.

15. *main*] Clar. Press: "the chief power"; Schmidt: "the whole."

20. *five . . . it*] Theobald suggested "five ducats fine," but did not adopt it in his edition; *farm it*, "rent it," contrasted with *sold in fee*, line 22, *i.e.* in absolute possession.

22. *ranker*] more abundant.

25, 26.] It has been suggested (*Gent. Magazine*, lx. 403) that these lines belong to the Captain.

27. *imposthume*] Minsheu defines the word "a course of evil humours gathered to some part of the bodie"; Cotgrave: "an inward swelling full of corrupt matter."



And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,  
 If his chief good and market of his time  
 Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more. 35  
 Sure he that made us with such large discourse,  
 Looking before and after, gave us not  
 That capability and god-like reason  
 To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be  
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40  
 Of thinking too precisely on the event,—  
 A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom  
 And ever three parts coward,—I do not know  
 Why yet I live to say "This thing's to do,"  
 Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and  
 means, 45  
 To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me;  
 Witness this army, of such mass and charge,  
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,  
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd  
 Makes mouths at the invisible event; 50  
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure  
 To all that fortune, death and danger dare,  
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great  
 Is not to stir without great argument,

39. *fust*] Q, *rust* Rowe.

34. *market*] that which he 'purchases with his time.

36. *discourse*] power of thought and reasoning; see I. ii. 150.

39. *fust*] grow mouldy; Cotgrave explains *fuste*, "fustie, tasting of the cask." Fr. *fuste*, a cask.

41. *event*] issue, consequences, as in line 50.

47. *charge*] cost.

50. *mouths*] a common corruption

of "mows," grimaces, found in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, III. ii. 238; see II. ii. 386, *ante*.

53-56.] To stir without great argument (matter in dispute) is not rightly to be great, but to find quarrel in a straw when honour's at the stake is an attribute of true greatness. The "not," as Furness argues, belongs to the copula, not to the predicate.

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw 55  
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,  
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,  
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,  
 And let all sleep, while, to my shame, I see  
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men, 60  
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,  
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot  
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,  
 Which is not tomb enough and continent  
 To hide the slain? Oh, from this time forth, 65  
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!  
 [Exit.

SCENE V.—*Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.*

*Enter* QUEEN, HORATIO, and a Gentleman.

*Queen.* I will not speak with her.

*Gent.* She is importunate, indeed distract;  
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

*Queen.* What would she have?

*Gent.* She speaks much of her father; says she hears  
 There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats  
 her heart; 5

*Scene v.*

Enter . . .] Pope; Enter Horatio, Gertrard, and a Gentleman Q; Enter  
 Queene and Horatio F. 2, 4. Gent.] Q, Hor. F.

61. *trick of fame*] toy or trifle of  
 fame; *Taming of the Shrew*, iv. iii.  
 67: "a knack, a toy, a trick, a  
 baby's cap." Perhaps "fantasy"  
 also should be connected with "of  
 fame."

64. *continent*] receptacle, that which  
 contains, as in *Midsommer Night's  
 Dream*, II. i. 92.

*Scene v.*

1-16. The only variation here from  
 the distribution of speeches in Q is  
 the assignment of the words "Let  
 her come in" (line 16) to the Queen  
 instead of to Horatio. Collier suggests  
 that the omission in F of the Gentle-  
 man was to avoid the employment of  
 another actor.

Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,  
 That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,  
 Yet the unshaped use of it doth move  
 The hearers to collection; they aim at it,  
 And botch the words up fit to their own  
 thoughts; 10

Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield  
 them,

Indeed would make one think there might be  
 thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

*Hor.* 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew  
 Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds. 15

*Queen.* Let her come in. [*Exit Gentleman.*

[*Aside.*] To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss;

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,

It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. 20

*Re-enter Gentleman, with* OPHELIA.

*Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

9. *aim*] F (*ayme*), *yawne* Q. 12. *might*] Q, *would* F. 14-16.] given to Horatio Q, given to Queen F. Arranged here as conjectured by Blackstone; lines 14, 15 are continued to Gentleman by Hanmer and several editors. 16. *Exit Gentleman*] Hanmer and several editors; *Exit Hor.* Johnson and others; omitted Q, F. 17. *Aside*] Capell; omitted Q, F. 21. *Re-enter . . .*] Cambridge; *Enter Ophelia* Q (after line 16); *Enter Ophelia*, distracted F.

6. *Spurns enviously*] kicks spitefully. Compare *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. v. 17, where Antony

"spurns the rush that lies before him." 113.

9. *collection*] inference, but here with the idea of a preliminary gathering together of Ophelia's distracted thoughts. Compare *Cymbeline*, v. v. 432. 21. *Oph.*] The stage direction or Q 1 is: "Enter Ofelia playing on a Lute, and her baire downe singing." For the traditional music of Ophelia's songs, see Furness, *Hamlet*, or E. W. Naylor, *Shakespeare and Music*, 1896.

*Queen.* How now, Ophelia?

*Oph.* [Sings.] *How should I your true love know  
From another one?*

*By his cockle hat and staff*

25

*And his sandal shoon.*

*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

*Oph.* Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

[Sings.] *He is dead and gone, lady,*

*He is dead and gone;*

30

*At his head a grass-green turf,*

*At his heels a stone.*

O, ho!

*Queen.* Nay, but, Ophelia,—

*Oph.* Pray you, mark.

[Sings.] *White his shroud as the mountain snow,—*

*Enter KING.*

*Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.

35

*Oph.* [Sings.] *Larded with sweet flowers;*

*Which bewept to the grave did not go*

*With true-love showers.*

*King.* How do you, pretty lady?

23. *Sings*] *shee sings* Q, omitted F. 28. *Say you?*] F, *Say you*, Q.  
29. *Sings*] *Song* Q, omitted F. 33. *O, ho!*] Q, omitted F, *Oh, oh!* Cambridge.  
34. *Sings*] omitted Q, F. *Enter King*] Q; after *stone*, line 32, F.  
36. *Sings*] *Song* Q, opposite line 37; *Larded*] Q 1, F; *Larded* all Q.  
37. *grave*] Q 1, F; *ground* Q; *did not*] Q, F, Q 1; *did* Pope and many editors.  
39. *you*] Q, *ye* F.

25. *cockle hat*] a hat with a scallop-shell stuck in it, the sign of a pilgrim having been at the shrine of St. James of Compostella. For the disguise of a lover as pilgrim compare *Romeo and Juliet*, I. v.

36. *Larded*] garnished, as in v, ii. 20.

37. *did not go*] It seems rash—Q 1, Q, and F agreeing—to adopt Pope's emendation "*did go*," lest Shakespeare may have meant a distracted allusion to the "*obscure burial*" (line 212) of Polonius.

*Oph.* Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a  
baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we  
are, but know not what we may be. God be  
at your table!

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when  
they ask you what it means, say you this:

[Sings.] *To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine.* 50  
*Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,  
And dupp'd the chamber door;  
Let in the maid, that out a maid  
Never departed more.*

*King.* Pretty Ophelia! 55

*Oph.* Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

40. *God 'ild*] Capell, *good dild* Q, *God dil'd* F. 44] marked Aside  
Furness. 45. *Pray you*] F, *Pray* Q. 47. *Sings*] *Song* Q, omitted F.  
56. *Indeed, la,*] Johnson, *Indeeds* Q, *Indeed la?* F.

40. *'ild*] yield, reward, as in *As  
You Like It*, III. iii. 76.

40. *owl*] Douce records a story  
"among the vulgar in Gloucester-  
shire": Jesus asked for bread at a  
baker's shop; the mistress put dough  
in the oven, was reprimanded by  
her daughter, who reduced its size;  
the dough miraculously grew huge;  
the daughter cried out "Heugh,  
heugh, heugh," like an owl, where-  
upon Jesus transformed her to an  
owl. In Fletcher, *The Nice Valour*,  
III. iii. we find:

"Give me a nest of owls,  
and take 'em:

Happy is he, say I, whose window  
opens

To a brown baker's chimney! he  
shall be sure there

To hear the bird sometimes after  
twilight."

The idea of Ophelia's own trans-  
formation, suggested by that of the  
baker's daughter, is touched on in the  
words "Lord, etc."

44. *Conceit*] imagination, as fre-  
quently.

50. *Valentine*] Halliwell: "This  
song alludes to the custom of the first  
girl seen by a man on the morning of  
this day being considered his Valen-  
tine, or true-love."

52. *dupp'd*] dup, do up, open.  
Edwardes, *Damon and Pytheas*, 1564:  
"Will they not dup the gate to-  
day?"

[Sings.] *By Gis and by Saint Charity.*

*Alack, and fie for shame!*

*Young men will do't, if they come to't;*

*By Cock, they are to blame.*

60

*Quoth she, before you tumbled me,*

*You promised me to wed:*

He answers:

*So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,*

*An thou hadst not come to my bed.*

65

*King.* How long hath she been thus?

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient;

but I cannot choose but weep, to think they

should lay him i' the cold ground. My

brother shall know of it: and so I thank you 70

for your good counsel.—Come, my coach!—

Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies;

good night, good night. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray  
you.— [*Exit Horatio.*]

Oh, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs 75

All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,

But in battalions! First, her father slain;

57. *Sings*] omitted Q, F. 63. *He answers*] (*He answers*) Q, omitted F.  
65. *An*] *Hanmer*; And Q, F. 66. *thus*] Q, *this* F. 69. *should*] F,  
*would* Q. 72, 73. *Good . . . night*] F substantially; *God night, Ladies, god*  
*night. Sweet Ladyes god night, god night.* Q. 74. *Exit Hor.*] *Theobald*;  
omitted Q, F. 76. *death.* O] F, *death, and now behold*, 8 Q. 77. *sorrows*  
*come*] Q, *sorrows comes* F. 78. *battalions*] Q, *Battaliaes* F.

57. *Gis*] an abbreviation or pious disguise of "Jesus"; spelt also *jis* and *jysse*; for examples see *Nares' Glossary*. 60. *Cock*] a perversion of "God."

57. *Saint Charity*] the grace personified. E. K. glosses "Saint *Charitie*," in *Spenser, Shepherd's Calendar, May*: "the Catholiques comen othe." In the *Canterbury Tales*, *Manciple's Prologue*, we have "Cockes bones."



Next, your son gone; and he most violent author  
Of his own just remove: the people muddled, 80  
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and  
whispers,

For good Polonius' death; and we have done but  
greenly,

In hugger-mugger to inter him; poor Ophelia  
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,  
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts;  
Last, and as much containing as all these, 86

Her brother is in secret come from France,  
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,  
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear  
With pestilent speeches of his father's death; 90

Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,  
Will nothing stick our person to arraign  
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,  
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places

Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*

*Queen.* Alack, what noise is this? 95

*King.* Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the  
door.—

81. *their*] F, omitted Q. 88. *Feeds on his wonder*] Johnson, *Feeds on this wonder* Q, *Keepes on his wonder* F. 92. *person*] Q, *persons* F.  
95. *Alack . . . this*] F, omitted Q. 96. *Where are*] F, *Attend, where is* Q.

83. *In hugger-mugger*] secretly. Steevens quotes North's *Plutarch* (Brutus): "Antonius thinking good . . . like a murdering-piece aim not . . . that his bodie should be honourably buried, and not in hugger-mugger." Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Double Marriage*, iv. ii.: "A father's curses . . . like a murdering-piece aim not at one, But all that stand within the dangerous level."

94. *murdering-piece*] a cannon loaded with case-shot (small projectiles put up in cases). Steevens quotes 96. *Switzers*] Malone quotes Nash, *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*, 1594: "Law, logicke, and the Switzers may be hired to fight for any body."

*Enter another Gentleman.*

What is the matter?

*Gent.* Save yourself, my lord;  
The ocean, overpeering of his list,  
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste  
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head, 100  
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;  
And, as the world were now but to begin,  
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,  
The ratifiers and props of every word,  
They cry "Choose we; Laertes shall be king!" 105  
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,  
"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"

*Queen.* How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!

Oh, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

*King.* The doors are broke. [Noise within. 110

*Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following.*

*Laer.* Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Enter . . . ] Staunton, Enter a Messenger Q, F after death, line 95.  
99. *impetuous*] *impitious* Q, *impittious* F. 105. *They*] F, *The* Q.  
110. Noise within] F (after line 109), A noise within Q (opposite line 108).  
Enter Laertes . . . ] Enter Laertes with others Q (after line 109), Enter  
Laertes F (after line 109). 111. *this king? Sirs*] Q, *the King, sirs?* F.

98. *list*] boundary, as in *Othello*, iv.  
i. 76.

100. *head*] a force raised, or body of  
people gathered, especially in insur-  
rection; as in *1 Henry IV.* iii. ii.

167. Pepys, *Diary*, 8 Jan. 1661:  
"Some talk to-day of a head of  
Fanatiques, that do appear about  
Barnett."

104. *word*] Ward, weal, and work  
have been proposed instead of "word";  
no emendation is required; antiquity  
and custom are the true ratifiers and

props of every word (perhaps in the  
sense of title); or—less probably—the  
rabble, ready to make good and to  
support every word they utter, cry, etc.

109. *counter*] Clar. Press quotes the  
definition of "counter" in Holme's  
*Academy of Armory*, ii. ix.: "When  
a hound hunteth backwards, the  
same way that the chase is come."  
"The huntsmen," writes Turbervile  
(*Venerie*), ". . . must take heede that  
their houndes take not the counter by  
cause the harte is fledde backwards."

*Danes.* No, let's come in.

*Laer.* I pray you, give me leave.

*Danes.* We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*]

*Laer.* I thank you: keep the door.—O thou vile king,  
Give me my father!

*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes. 115

*Laer.* That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me  
bastard,

Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot  
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brows  
Of my true mother.

*King.* What is the cause, Laertes,  
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?— 120

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;  
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason can but peep to what it would,  
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,  
Why thou art thus incensed.—Let him go,  
Gertrude.— 125

Speak, man.

*Laer.* Where's my father?

*King.* Dead.

*Queen.* But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.

113. *They retire . . .* ] Capell; omitted Q, F. 116. *that's calm*] Q, *that calmes* F. 118. *brows*] Grant White; *brow* Q, F. 127. *Where's*] F, *Where is* Q.

118. *brows*] Grant White (followed by Cambridge and Furness), as required by *between*. 121. *fear*] fear for.

To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil! 130  
 Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!  
 I dare damnation. To this point I stand,  
 That both the worlds I give to negligence,  
 Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged  
 Most thoroughly for my father.

*King.* Who shall stay you? 135

*Laer.* My will, not all the world;  
 And for my means, I'll husband them so well,  
 They shall go far with little.

*King.* Good Laertes.

If you desire to know the certainty  
 Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your  
 ,revenge, 140  
 That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,  
 Winner and loser?

*Laer.* None but his enemies.

*King.* Will you know them then?

*Laer.* To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;  
 And, like the kind life-rendering pelican, 145  
 Repast them with my blood.

*King.* Why, now you speak  
 Like a good child and a true gentleman.

131. *pit*] *pit* Q, *pit*. F. 136. *world*] F, *worlds* Q, *world's* Pope.  
 140. *father's death*] F, *father* Q; *is't*] Q, *if* F. 142. *loser*] Q 6; *looser*.  
 Q, F. 145. *pelican*] Q, *politician* F.

141. *swoopstake*] Q, F print *soop-*  
*stake*; Q 1 has—

“Therefore will you like a most  
 desperate gamster,  
 Swoop-stake-like, draw at friend,  
 and foe, and all?”

Sweepstakes is a game of cards in  
 which a player may win all the stakes  
 or take all the tricks.

145. *pelican*] Sir Thomas Browne  
 in *Vulgar Errors*, v. chap. i. dis-  
 cusses “the picture of the Pelican  
 opening her breast with her bill, and  
 feeding her young ones with the blood  
 distilled from her.” Allusions occur  
 in *Richard II.* II. i. 126, and *Lear*,  
 III. iv. 77.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
 And am most sensibly in grief for it,  
 It shall as level to your judgment pierce 150  
 As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?—

*Re-enter OPHELIA.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times  
 salt,  
 Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—  
 By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight, 155  
 Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!  
 Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—  
 O heavens! is't possible a young maid's wits  
 Should be as mortal as an old man's life?  
 Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine 160  
 It sends some precious instance of itself  
 After the thing it loves.

Oph. [*Sings.*] *They bore him barefaced on the bier;*  
*Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;*  
*And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—* 165  
 Fare you well, my dove!

149. *sensibly*] Q, *sensible* F. 150. *pierce*] F, *peare* Q, 'pear Johnson.  
 151. Danes . . . *in*] Capell; Q has stage direction A noyse within, opposite  
*eye*, and gives *Let her come in* to Laertes; F has "A noise within. Let her  
 come in," as if a stage-direction, after *eye*. 155. *by*] F, *with* Q.  
 156. *Till*] F, *Tell* Q; *turn*] Q, *turnes* F. 159. *an old*] F, *a poore* Q.  
 160–162. *Nature . . . loves*] F, omitted Q. 163. *Sings*] *Song* Q, omitted F.  
 164] F, omitted Q. 165. *in*] Q, on F; *rain'd*] Q, *raines* F. 166. *Fare*  
 . . . *dove*] Capell; in italics (as if last line of song) F; using Roman for  
 the whole speech, Q leaves it doubtful.

160–162] Nature is delicate (or Ophelia's sanity after Polonius as a  
 accomplished) in love, and sends precious token (or sample) of itself.

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,  
It could not move thus.

*Oph.* You must sing, *Down a-down, and you call  
him a-down-a.* Oh, how the wheel becomes it! 170  
It is the false steward that stole his master's  
daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing's more than matter.

*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;  
pray you, love, remember; and there is pansies, 175  
that's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness: thoughts and re-  
membrance fitted.

169, 170.] see note below; Q for Down a-down has a downe a downe.  
175. *pray you*] Q, *Pray F.*

169, 170. *You . . . a-down-a*] Q, F print the whole speech in Roman type. Johnson used italics for *You . . . a-down-a*; (Capell had printed *Down* with a capital). Staunton, Globe, Cambridge print the same words as verse. The above follows Steevens. It has been suggested that *You* and *and you* should be in Roman, as instructions to two supposed singers.

170. *wheel*] Guest, *English Rhythms*, bk. iv. chap. iv., uses *wheel* for a kind of refrain, the return of some peculiar rhythm at the end of each stanza. Steevens quoted from memory an example of this use of the word from a book of which he had forgotten the title and date. No early example appears to have been found. Cotgrave explains French *refrain* as "the Refret, burthen, or downe of a ballade." F 2 has "wheeles become." Perhaps Malone was right in thinking that the reference is to a song sung at the spinning-wheel; he refers aptly to *Twelfth Night*, II. iv. 45, and quotes a men-

tion of ballads "sung to the wheel," from Hall, *Virgidemiarum*, iv. vi.

174. *rosemary*] Used as a symbol of remembrance, both at weddings and funerals. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, iv. v. 79, and *Winter's Tale*, iv. iv. 74-76. See Ellacombe's *Plant Lore of Shakespeare* for this and the other flowers. Perhaps the rosemary is given to Laertes, mistaken by Ophelia for her lover. Delius supposes the flowers to exist only in Ophelia's distracted imagination. In Q 1 her first words, after re-entrance, are "Wel God a mercy, I a bin gathering of floures."

175. *pansies*] for thoughts, Fr. *pensées*. Ellacombe states that still in Warwickshire the pansy is named love-in-idleness, signifying love in vain. Chapman in *All Fools*, II. i., refers to the pansy as "for lover's thoughts."

177. *document*] a piece of instruction, lesson. So Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, I. x. 19: "And heavenly documents thereout did preach."



*Oph.* There's fennel for you, and columbines;  
there's rue for you; and here's some for me; 180  
we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays; oh,  
you must wear your rue with a difference.  
There's a daisy; I would give you some  
violets, but they withered all when my father  
died; they say he made a good end,— 185

[Sings.] *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.*

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,  
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

*Oph.* [Sings.] *And will he not come again?*  
*And will he not come again?* 190

181. *herb of grace*] Q, *Herbe-Grace* F, *hearb a' grace* Q 1. 181, 182. *oh, you must*] F, *you may* Q, *you must* Q 1. 186. *Sings*] Capell; omitted Q, F. 187. *Thought*] Q, F; *Thoughts* Q 1; *affliction*] F; *afflictions* Q 1, Q. 189. *Sings*] *Song* Q, omitted F.

179. *fennel*] Malone quotes *A Handfull of Pleasant Delites*, 1584: "Fennel is for flatterers"; Florio has "Dare finocchio, to flatter, or give Fennell." Given probably to the King.

179. *columbines*] Steevens says: "It should seem as if this flower was the emblem of cuckoldom." Quotations from Chapman's *All Fools*, II. i. (misunderstood through abbreviation), and *Caltha Poetarum*, 1599, verify the statement. Given probably to the King.

180. *rue*] the emblem of sorrow and repentance. See *Richard II.* III. iv.

105. The name herb-grace or herb of grace is found in the herbals and dictionaries. Given to the Queen. Ophelia wears her rue as the emblem of sorrow and of grace. "With a difference" had a heraldic meaning (slight distinctions in coats of arms borne by members of the same family), but that meaning is not required here. Skeat suggests that the difference is

that of "rue" and "ruth" (referring to the passage in *Richard II.*).

183. *daisy*] Henley quotes Greene, *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*: "Next them grew the dissembling daisie, to warne such light-of-love wenches not to trust every faire promise that such amorous batchelors make them." But perhaps Chaucer's flower of the loyal Alcestis has here no such significance; perhaps it is not given away.

184. *violets*] Malone quotes *A Handfull of Pleasant Delites*: "Violet is for faithfulness." Perhaps, as Clar. Press suggests, these words are spoken to Horatio.

186. *Robin*] *Two Noble Kinsmen*, IV. i: "I can sing the Broom, And Bonny Robin." Chappell (*Popular Music of the Olden Times*) identifies the song with one given in Holborne's *Ciththarn Schoole*, 1597, and elsewhere.

187. *Thought*] careful or melancholy thought, as in III. i. 85.

*No, no, he is dead,  
Go to thy death-bed,  
He never will come again.*

*His beard was as white as snow,  
All flaxen was his poll ;* 195  
*He is gone, he is gone,  
And we cast away moan :  
God ha' mercy on his soul !*

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be  
wi' you! [Exit.

*Laer.* Do you see this, O God ! 200

*King.* Laertes, I must commune with your grief,  
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,  
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,  
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.  
If by direct or by collateral hand 205  
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,  
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,  
To you in satisfaction ; but if not,  
Be you content to lend your patience to us,  
And we shall jointly labour with your soul 210  
To give it due content.

*Laer.*

Let this be so :

194. was as] Q, as F, was Johnson. 195. All] F, omitted Q. 198. God ha' mercy] Collier, God a mercy Q, Gramercy F. 199. Christian] F, Christians Q ; I pray God] F, omitted Q ; you] Q, ye F. Exit] Exeunt Ophelia F, omitted Q. 200. Do . . . God!] Capell, Doe you this & God. Q, Do you see this, you gods ? F.

198, 199. God . . . souls] A common conclusion, says Steevens, to monumental inscriptions. Sir Thomas More's *Workes*, 1557, p. 337 : "We see there [in purgatory] our chyl dren too, whom we loved so well, pipe,

sing, and daunce, and no more thinke on their fathers soules than on their old shone, saving that sometime cometh out God have mercy on all christen soules."

His means of death, his obscure burial,  
 No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,  
 No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,  
 Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth, 215  
 That I must call 't in question.

*King.* So you shall;  
 And where the offence is let the great axe fall.  
 I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

*Enter HORATIO and a Servant.*

*Hor.* What are they that would speak with me?

*Serv.* Sailors, sir; they say they have letters for you.

*Hor.* Let them come in.— [*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet. 5

*Enter Sailors.*

*First Sail.* God bless you, sir.

*Hor.* Let him bless thee too.

*First Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's  
 a letter for you, sir,—it comes from the

212. *burial*] F, *funerall* Q. 213. *trophy, sword,*] F, *trophe sword,* Q,  
*trophy sword,* Pope. 214. *rite*] F, *right* Q. 216. *call 't*] Q, *call* F.

*Scene VI.*

Enter . . . ] Capell; Enter *Horatio* and others Q; Enter *Horatio*,  
 with an Attendant F. 2. *Serv.*] F, *Gent.* Q; *Sailors*] F, *Seafaring*  
*men* Q. 5. Enter *Sailors*] Q; Enter *Sailor* F. 6, 8. *First Sail.*]  
 1. S. Capell; Say. Q, F. 8. *an't*] Q 6, and Q, and't F. 9. *comes*] F,  
*came* Q.

212. *obscure*] accented in different 216. *That*] so that, as in iv. vii.  
 places by Shakespeare on the first or 148.  
 on the second syllable.

ambassador that was bound for England,—if 10  
 your name be Horatio, as I am let to know  
 it is.

Hor. [Reads.] *Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked  
 this, give these fellows some means to the king;  
 they have letters for him. Ere we were two days 15  
 old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment  
 gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of  
 sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the  
 grapple I boarded them; on the instant they 20  
 got clear of our ship, so I alone became their  
 prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves  
 of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am  
 to do a good turn for them. Let the king have  
 the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me  
 with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. 25  
 I have words to speak in thine ear will make  
 thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the  
 bore of the matter. These good fellows will  
 bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and  
 Guildenstern hold their course for England; of 30  
 them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.*

*He that thou knowest thine,* HAMLET.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;

10. ambassador] Q, Ambassadors F. 18. and in] Q, in F. 23. good] F, omitted Q. 25. haste] F, speede Q. 26. thine] Q, your F. 28. bore] F, bord Q. 32. He] F, So Q (with no point before *Hamlet*). 33. give] F, omitted Q, make Q 4 and several editors.

22. knew what they did] Miles, *Southern Review*, April and July 1870, suggests that the pursuit was prearranged by Hamlet, and that when he spoke to his mother of hoist-

ing the engine with his own petar, this was in his mind.

28. bore] calibre, figurative from bore of gun.

And do't the speedier, that you may direct me  
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*Another Room in the Castle.*

*Enter KING and LAERTES.*

*King.* Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,  
And you must put me in your heart for friend,  
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
That he which hath your noble father slain  
Pursued my life.

*Laer.* It well appears ; but tell me 5  
Why you proceeded not against these feats,  
So crimeful and so capital in nature,  
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,  
You mainly were stirr'd up.

*King.* Oh, for two special reasons,  
Which may to you perhaps seem much unsinew'd, 10  
And yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother  
Lives almost by his looks ; and for myself,—  
My virtue or my plague, be it either which,—  
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,  
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere, 15  
I could not but by her. The other motive,  
Why to a public count I might not go,  
Is the great love the general gender bear him ;  
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,

6. *proceeded*] F, *proceede* Q. 7. *crimeful*] F, *criminall* Q. 8. *safety*] F, *safetie*, *greatnes* Q. 11. *And*] F, *But* Q ; *they are*] F, *tha'r* Q.  
14. *She's so conjunctive*] F, *She is so conclave* Q.

14. *conjunctive*] The idea of planetary conjunction seems to have suggested the line that follows.

17. *count*] account, reckoning.

18. *general gender*] common species, community of men.

Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone, 20  
 Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,  
 Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,  
 Would have reverted to my bow again,  
 And not where I had aim'd them.

*Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost; 25

A sister driven into desperate terms,  
 Whose worth, if praises may go back again,  
 Stood challenger on mount of all the age  
 For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

*King.* Break not your sleeps for that; you must not  
 think 30

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull  
 That we can let our beard be shook with danger  
 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more;  
 I loved your father, and we love ourself;  
 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,— 35

*Enter a Messenger.*

How now! what news?

*Mess.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet;  
 This to your majesty; this to the queen.

20. *Would*] F, *Worke* Q. 22. *loud a wind*] F, *loved Arm'd* Q. 24. *And*] F, *But* Q; *had*] F, *have* Q; *aim'd*] Q, *arm'd* F. 27. *Whose worth*] Q, *Who was* F. 36. *How . . . Hamlet*] F, omitted Q. 37. *This*] F, *These* Q.

20. *spring*] In Harrison's *Description of England* (ed. Furnivall, p. 349) it is stated that the baths of King's Newnham, in Shakespeare's county, Warwickshire, have the property of turning wood to stone. The reference was supposed by Reed to be to the dropping well at Knaresborough.

22. *loud a wind*] Jennens would maintain the Q misprint "loved arm'd," explaining it "one so loved and armed with the affections . . . of the people." Elze suggests "solid arms," which he connects with his reading *greaves* in line 21.

21. *gyves*] Daniel would read *gyres*, wild and whirling actions. Elze 27. *praises*] if I may return in praise to Ophelia's better days.



*King.* From Hamlet? who brought them?

*Mess.* Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not;

They were given me by Claudio; he received  
them 40

Of him that brought them.

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them.—

Leave us. *[Exit Messenger.]*

*[Reads.]* *High and mighty, you shall know I am  
set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I  
beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall, 45  
first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the  
occasion of my sudden and more strange return.*

HAMLET.

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing? 50

*Laer.* Know you the hand?

*King.* 'Tis Hamlet's character. "Naked!"

And in a postscript here, he says "alone."

Can you advise me?

*Laer.* I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come: 55

It warms the very sickness in my heart,

That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,

"Thus didest thou."

*King.* If it be so, Laertes,—

As how should it be so? how otherwise?—

41. *Of . . . them*] Q, omitted F. 46. *asking your*] F, *asking you* Q.  
47. *occasion*] Q, *occasions* F; and *more strange*] F, omitted Q. 48. *Hamlet*  
F, omitted Q. 50. *abuse, and*] Q, *abuse? or* F. 54. *advise*] F, *devise* Q.  
55. *I'm*] F, *I am* Q. 57. *shall*] F, omitted Q. 58. *didest*] F, *didst* Q.

59. *As . . . otherwise*] If the King speaks—how can he have returned?  
refers to Laertes' feelings "should it Yet how can it be otherwise with his  
*not*" (or *but*) seems required. But it letter in my hand? The doubt is  
may be Hamlet's return of which he continued in line 62.

Will you be ruled by me?

*Laer.* Ay, my lord; 60

So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,  
As checking at his voyage, and that he means  
No more to undertake it, I will work him  
To an exploit now ripe in my device, 65  
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;  
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;  
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,  
And call it accident.

*Laer.* My lord, I will be ruled;  
The rather, if you could devise it so 70  
That I might be the organ.

*King.* It falls right.  
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,  
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality  
Wherein, they say, you shine; your sum of parts  
Did not together pluck such envy from him 75  
As did that one, and that, in my regard,  
Of the unworthiest siege.

*Laer.* What part is that, my lord?

*King.* A very riband in the cap of youth,  
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes  
The light and careless livery that it wears 80

60. *Ay, my lord*] Q, omitted F. 61. *So you will*] Q, *If so you'l* F.  
63. *checking at*] F, *the King at* Q, *liking not* Q 4. 69-82. *My lord . . .*  
*graveness*] Q, omitted F.

63. *checking*] A hawk "checks" artifice or stratagem. For *practice*,  
when it forsakes its proper quarry and see v. ii. 328.

63. *checking at*] F, *the King at* Q, *liking not* Q 4. 69-82. *My lord . . .*  
*graveness*] Q, omitted F.

68. *uncharge the practice*] acquit, free from accusation (charge), the  
77. *siege*] rank (literally, seat), as  
in *Othello*, I. ii. 22: "men of royal  
siege."

Than settled age his sables and his weeds,  
 Importing health and graveness. Two months since,  
 Here was a gentleman of Normandy;—  
 I have seen myself, and served against, the French,  
 And they can well on horseback; but this gallant 85  
 Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat,  
 And to such wondrous doing brought his horse  
 As he had been incorpsed and demi-natured  
 With the brave beast; so far he topp'd my thought,  
 That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks, 90  
 Come short of what he did.

*Laer.* A Norman was't?

*King.* A Norman.

*Laer.* Upon my life, Lamord.

*King.* The very same.

*Laer.* I know him well; he is the brooch indeed

And gem of all the nation. 95

*King.* He made confession of you,

82. *Two*] Q, *Some two* F; *since*] Q, *hence* F. 84. *I have*] Q, *I've* F.  
 85. *can*] Q, *ran* F. 86. *unto*] Q, *into* F. 88. *he had*] Q 6; *had he* Q, F.  
 89. *topp'd*] Q, *past* F; *my*] F, *me* Q. 93. *Lamord*] Q, *Lamound* F.  
 95. *the*] Q, *our* F.

82. *health*] denoting an attention to health. Schmidt understands *health* as prosperity. Warburton read "wealth." Furness takes "health" to refer to the livery of youth, and "graveness" to that of settled age.

85. *can*] are skilled. Compare *Phenix and Turtle*, 14: "the priest . . . That defunctive music can."

89. *topp'd*] exceeded, as in *Macbeth*, iv. iii. 57.

90. *forgery*] invention, as in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. i. 81.

93. *Lamord*] I retain the Q form of the name, having noticed in Cotgrave, "*Mords*, a bitt of a horse." Several

of Shakespeare's names for minor characters are significant; the word *mords* is masculine, but the printer of Q may be responsible for *La*. Pope has Lamond; Malone conjectured Lamode; Grant White has Lamont. C. E. Browne notes that Pietro Monte was the instructor of Louis VII.'s Master of the Horse.

94. *brooch*] ornament, as in Jonson's *Staple of News*, III. ii.: "Who is the very Brooch o' the Bench, Gem o' the city."

96. *confession*] the unwilling acknowledgment by a Frenchman of a Dane's superiority.

And gave you such a masterly report  
 For art and exercise in your defence,  
 And for your rapier most especially,  
 That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed 100  
 If one could match you; the scrimers of their nation,  
 He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,  
 If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his  
 Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy  
 That he could nothing do but wish and beg 105  
 Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.  
 Now, out of this,—

*Laer.* What out of this, my lord?

*King.* Laertes, was your father dear to you?  
 Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,  
 A face without a heart?

*Laer.* Why ask you this? 110

*King.* Not that I think you did not love your father,  
 But that I know love is begun by time,  
 And that I see, in passages of proof,  
 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.  
 There lives within the very flame of love 115  
 A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;  
 And nothing is at a like goodness still,  
 For goodness, growing to a plurisy,

99. *especially*] F, *especial* Q. 101-103. *you . . . this*] Q, *you Sir*.  
*This* F (omitting *the scrimers . . . opposed them*.) 106. *him*] F, *you* Q  
 and several editors. 107. *What*] Q, *Why* F. 115-124. *There . . .*  
*ulcer*] Q, omitted F.

101. *scrimers*] fencers. French, *escrimeurs*. 113. *passages of proof*] well-established instances.

102. *motion*] a fencing term; used by Vincentio Saviolo in his *Practise* (1595); see line 158 of the present scene. 117. *still*] constantly, as in II. ii. 42.  
 118. *plurisy*] plethora; as if derived from *plus*, *pluris*. So *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, v. 1: "the plurisy of people."

Dies in his own too-much; that we would do  
 We should do when we would; for this "would"  
 changes, 120

And hath abatements and delays as many  
 As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;  
 And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,  
 That hurts by easing. But to the quick o' the  
 ulcer:

Hamlet comes back; what would you undertake 125  
 To show yourself your father's son in deed  
 More than in words?

*Laer.* To cut his throat i' the church.

*King.* No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;  
 Revenge should have no bounds. But, good  
 Laertes,

Will you do this, keep close within your  
 chamber. 130

Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home;  
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,  
 And set a double varnish on the fame  
 The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine,  
 together

And wager on your heads; he, being remiss, 135  
 Most generous and free from all contriving,  
 Will not peruse the foils, so that with ease  
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose

123. *spendthrift*] Q 6, *spend-thirsts* Q. 126. *your . . . in deed*] F (with  
*indeed*), *indeede your fathers sonne* Q. 130. *chamber.*] Steevens; comma  
 after *chamber* Q, F. 135. *on*] F, *d'er* Q.

123. *spendthrift sigh*] Alluding to  
 the notion that sighs shorten life by  
 drawing blood from the heart. See *Mid-*  
*summer Night's Dream*, III. ii. 97. 128. *sanctuarize*] protect from pun-  
 ishment as a sanctuary does.  
 137. *peruse*] see II. i. 90.

A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice  
Requite him for your father.

*Laer.* I will do't; 140  
And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.  
I bought an unction of a mountebank,  
So mortal that but dip a knife in it,  
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,  
Collected from all simples that have virtue 145  
Under the moon, can save the thing from death  
That is but scratch'd withal; I'll touch my point  
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,  
It may be death.

*King.* Let's further think of this;  
Weigh what convenience both of time and  
means 150  
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,  
And that our drift look through our bad performance,  
'Twere better not assay'd; therefore this project  
Should have a back or second, that might hold,  
If this should blast in proof. Soft!—let me  
see— 155  
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings;  
I ha't:

141. *that*] F, omitted Q. 143. *that but dip*] Q, *I but dipt* F (*I = Ay*).  
150. *convenience*] F, *conueiance* Q. 151. *shape. If . . . fail,*] Rowe; Q  
has no point except comma after *faile*; F has comma after *shape*, semicolon  
after *faile*. 155. *should*] F, *did* Q. 156. *cunnings*] Q, *commings* F.

139. *unbated*] not blunted, as foils are by a button. *Love's Labour's Lost*,  
I. i. 6: "bate his scythe's keen edge."  
155. *blast in proof*] suffer blight in the trial.

139. *pass of practice*] treacherous thrust; see line 68. 156. *cunnings*] skill. Caldecott and Knight explain F *commings* as bouts at fence. Cotgrave has *Venuë*, "A comming; . . . also a vennie in fencing."

142. *mountebank*] quack-doctor, as in *Othello*, I. iii. 61.



When in your motion you are hot and dry,—  
 As make your bouts more violent to that end,—  
 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared  
     him 160

A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,  
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,  
 Our purpose may hold there. But stay! what  
     noise?—

*Enter QUEEN.*

How now, sweet queen!

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel, 165  
 So fast they follow.—Your sister's drown'd,  
     Laertes.

*Laer.* Drown'd! Oh, where?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;  
 There with fantastic garlands did she come, 170  
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,  
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,

159. *that*] Q, *the* F. 160. *prepared*] F, *prefard* Q. 162. *stuck*] Q, F;  
*tucke* Q 6. 163. *But . . . noise?*] Q, omitted F. 164. *How . . .*  
*queen*] F 2, *how sweet Queene* F, omitted Q. 166. *they*] Q, *they'l* F.  
 168. *aslant a*] F, *ascaunt the* Q. 169. *hoar*] *hore* F, *horry* Q. 170.  
*There with . . . come*] F, *Therewith . . . make* Q.

162. *stuck*] Dyce: "more properly *stock*, an abbreviation of *stoccado*," or *stoccata*, a thrust. So *Twelfth Night*, III. iv. 303. The *tucke* of Q 6 means rapier.

168. *willow*] significant of forsaken love.

171. *crow-flowers*] butter-cup, but used formerly of ragged-robin. In Gerarde's *Herbal* identified with "Wilde Williams, Marsh Gilloflours, and Cockow Gelloflours."

171. *long purples*] According to Ellacombe "the common purple or-

chises of the woods and meadows. The name of Dead Men's Fingers was given to them from the pale palmate roots of some of the species."

172. *liberal*] free-spoken, as in *Richard II.* II. i. 229, or licentious, as in *Much Ado*, IV. i. 93. Grosser names are found in old Herbals. "One," says Malone, "Gertrude had a particular reason to avoid—the *ram-pant widow*." To find a significance in each plant is perhaps to consider too curiously; but see notes in *Fur-ness*.

But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call  
them;

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke; 175  
When down her weedy trophies and herself  
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread  
wide,

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;  
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,  
As one incapable of her own distress, 180  
Or like a creature native and indued  
Unto that element; but long it could not be  
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
To muddy death.

*Laer.* Alas, then, she is drown'd! 185

*Queen.* Drown'd, drown'd.

*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,  
And therefore I forbid my tears; but yet  
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,  
Let shame say what it will; when these are  
gone 190

173. *cold*] F, *cull-cold* Q. 176. *her*] Q, *the* F. 179. *tunes*] Q 1, F;  
*laudes* Q. 181. *indued*] F, *indewed* Q. 183. *their*] Q, *her* F. 184. *lay*]  
Q, *buy* F. 185. *she is drown'd*] Q (note of exclamation, Pope); *is she*  
*drown'd*. Qq 4, 5; *is she drown'd*? F, Q 6.

175. *sliver*] a branch; properly  
a branch slivered (split) from a  
tree. So in *Macbeth*, IV. i. 28:  
"slips of yew Sliver'd in the moon's  
eclipse."

179. *tunes*] The agreement of Q 1  
and F argues strongly against the  
Q *lauds*, which some editors prefer,  
probably as heightening the pathos.

180. *incapable*] without capacity

to apprehend; see *capable* in III.  
ii. 14.

181. *indued*] brought to a state or  
condition in harmony with that ele-  
ment. So in *Othello*, III. iv. 146, an  
aching finger "*indues*" our health-  
ful members to a "sense of pain."

189. *trick*] way, as in 2 *Henry IV*.  
I. ii. 240: "it was always yet the  
trick of our English nation."

The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord ;  
 I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,  
 But that this folly douts it. [Exit.

King. Let's follow, Gertrude,  
 How much I had to do to calm his rage !  
 Now fear I this will give it start again ; 195  
 Therefore let's follow. [Exeunt.

## ACT V

SCENE I.—*A Churchyard.*

*Enter two Clowns, with spades and mattocks.*

*First Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial  
 that wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

*Second Clo.* I tell thee she is ; and therefore make  
 her grave straight ; the crowner hath sat on  
 her, and finds it Christian burial. 5

*First Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned  
 herself in her own defence ?

*Second Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

*First Clo.* It must be *se offendendo* ; it cannot be else.

192. *of fire*] F, *a fire* Q. 193. *douts*] Knight ; *doubts* F ; *drownes* Q, F 2.

*Act V. Scene 1.*

A Churchyard] Capell, A Church Rowe. 2. *that*] F, *when she* Q.  
 3. *and*] F, omitted Q. 9. *se offendendo*] F, *so offended* Q.

193. *douts*] does out, extinguishes. of the church, where suicides were  
 In *Henry V.* iv. ii. 11, where *dout* buried.  
 seems to be the verb, F has *doubt*.

*Act V. Scene 1.*

4. *straight*] straightway, immedi- 4. *crowner*] A form of "coroner"  
 ately, as in II. ii. 459. Johnson found in Holinshed, Harrison, Pepys,  
 supposed that it meant from east to and others.  
 west ; Douce, that it meant not north 9. *offendendo*] The Clown's mis-  
 take for *defendendo*, as perhaps *salva-*  
*tion* in line 2 for its opposite.

For here lies the point: if I drown myself 10  
wittingly it argues an act; and an act hath  
three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to  
perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

*Second Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver,—

*First Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; 15  
good: here stands the man; good: if the man  
go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will  
he nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if  
the water come to him, and drown him, he  
drowns not himself: argal, he that is not 20  
guilty of his own death shortens not his own  
life.

*Second Clo.* But is this law?

*First Clo.* Ay, marry, is't; crowner's quest law.

*Second Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this 25  
had not been a gentlewoman, she should have  
been buried out o' Christian burial.

*First Clo.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more  
pity that great folk should have countenance  
in this world to drown or hang themselves 30  
more than their even Christian.—Come, my

12. *to act*] Q, *an Acte* F.  
18. *that:] that*, Q, *that?* F.  
21. *Christen* Q.

13. *perform: argal*] F, *performe, or all*; Q.  
27. *o'] Jennens, a Q, of F.* 31. *Chris-*

12. *three branches*] Shakespeare seems to have read or heard of Plowden's report of Hales *v.* Petit. Sir James Hales had drowned himself; the coroner's jury returned a verdict of *felo de se*. Dame Hales's counsel argued that the act of suicide cannot be completed in a man's lifetime. Walsh, Serjeant, *contra* replied that "the act consists of three parts"—the imagination, the resolu-

tion, and the execution. Plowden's Commentaries were not translated from the French until the eighteenth century.

13. *argal*] the Clown's perversion of *ergo*.

24. *quest*] inquest.

31. *even Christian*] fellow Christian; found in Chaucer's *Parson's Tale*, in Latimer, and elsewhere.

spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

*Second Clo.* Was he a gentleman? 35

*First Clo.* A' was the first that ever bore arms.

*Second Clo.* Why, he had none.

*First Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged; could he dig without arms? 40  
I'll put another question to thee; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

*Second Clo.* Go to.

*First Clo.* What is he that builds stronger than 45  
either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

*Second Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

*First Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the 50  
gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill; now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come. 55

36. *A'*] Q, *He* F. The same difference occurs frequently in this scene, and elsewhere. 37-40. *Why . . . arms?*] F, omitted Q. 43. *thyself*—] F, *thy selfe*. Q. 48. *frame*] F, omitted Q.

34. *hold up*] maintain, continue, as in *Merry Wives*, v. v. 110.

35. *gentleman*] Adam's spade, says Douce, is set down in some of the books of heraldry as the most ancient form of escutcheon.

42, 43. *confess thyself*—] Malone: " 'And be hanged,' the Clown would have said . . . a common proverbial sentence."

*Second Clo.* "Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?"

*First Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

*Second Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

*First Clo.* To't.

60

*Second Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.*

*First Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and when you are asked this question next, say "a grave-maker"; the houses 65 that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Vaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit Second Clown*]

61. *Enter*] F, after line 71 Q. 66. *that*] F, omitted Q; *last*] Q 4; *lasts* Q, 67. *to Vaughan*] F (*Vaughan* italicised), *in*, and Q; *stoup*] F, *soope* Q.

58. *unyoke*] after this great effort you may unharness the team of your wit.

67. *Vaughan*] Unexplained; perhaps the name of a London tavern-keeper. The alehouse of "deaf Iohn" is mentioned in Jonson's *Alchemist*; in *Every Man out of his Humour*, v. vi., he mentions "a Jew, one Yohan," but not as a tavern-keeper. Vaughan is said to be a common Welsh name. Of several emendations recorded in the *Cambridge Shakespeare*, the most plausible is that of Mr. Tovey: "Go to, y'are gone: get thee gone, fetch." *Y'are gone* occurs, but in another connection, in Q 1, meaning "you are out of it, you have failed to solve the question"; *get thee gone* occurs in the same Q after "the gallows dooes well to them that do ill." Or we might read with Q "Go, get thee in," and add, "y'are gone," as an emendation of "Vaughan." If "Vaughan" was a printer's error of

F, the reader for the press, taking it for a proper name, might have substituted "to" for "in," and so produced the F reading. Why has no ingenious gentleman suggested a shake and jumble of the letters, with an error of *a* for *o* (the boxes for these letters being next each other in the compositor's case)? The first Clown's "confess thyself" was to be followed by "and be hanged," but he was interrupted; he proceeds, however, to say that the gallows may do well for his comrade. Now *Vaughan* easily yields us *You* (misprinted *Yau*); *ghan* is *hang* with the last letter misplaced as first. Read therefore, the ingenious gentleman might say, with Q, "Go, get thee in," and add, "hang you; fetch, etc." The F "to" may be accounted for as mentioned above.

67. *stoup*] Jennens supposes that Q *soope* is the Clown's pronunciation of *sup*.



*First Clown digs, and sings.*

*In youth, when I did love, did love,*

*Methought it was very sweet,*

*To contract, Oh! the time, for, Ah! my  
behove,*

70

*Oh! methought there was nothing meet.*

*Ham.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business,  
that he sings at grave-making?

*Hor.* Custom hath made it in him a property of  
easiness.

75

*Ham.* 'Tis e'en so; the hand of little employment  
hath the daintier sense.

*First Clo.* [Sings.] *But age, with his stealing steps,*

*Hath claw'd me in his clutch,*

*And hath shipp'd me intil the land,*

80

*As if I had never been such.*

[*Throws up a skull.*]

*Ham.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could  
sing once; how the knave jowls it to the

70. for, *Ah*] for a Q, F. 71. there was nothing] F, there a was nothing  
a Q. 73. *at*] F, *in* Q. 79. *claw'd*] Q, caught F. 80. *intil*] F, into  
Q. 81. Throws . . . ] Capell; omitted Q, F.

68-71.] This and the two following stanzas are—with variations here—from a poem attributed to Lord Vaux, and printed in Tottel's *Miscellany* (p. 173, ed. Arber). The *Oh* and *Ah* are perhaps grunts of the digger at work; Clar. Press, however, take them to represent drawling notes, like the *stille-a* and *mile-a* of Autolycus in *Winter's Tale*, iv. iii., which may be right, and finds support from a similar example in the Tragedy of *Hoffman*. "To contract the time" seems to be

caught up from a later stanza of the poem "And tract of time," as "And shipp'd me intil the land" certainly is; the resulting nonsense being designed by Shakespeare. For the traditional music—the tune of *The Children in the Wood*—see Furness (from Chappell), p. 385.

74, 75. *property of easiness*] a peculiarity that now comes easily.

80. *intil*] into, as in Chaucer.

83. *jowls*] knocks (used specially of the head), as in *All's Well*, i. iii. 58.

ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that  
 did the first murder! It might be the pate 85  
 of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches,  
 one that would circumvent God, might it  
 not?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Or of a courtier, which could say "Good 90  
 morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good  
 lord?" This might be my Lord Such-a-one,  
 that praised my Lord Such-a-one's horse, when  
 he meant to beg it, might it not?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord. 95

*Ham.* Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's;  
 chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with  
 a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an  
 we had the trick to see't. Did these bones  
 cost no more the breeding, but to play at 100  
 loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on't.

84. *it were*] F, *twere* Q. 85. *It*] F, *This* Q. 86. *now o'er-reaches*] Q,  
*o're Offices* F. 87. *would*] Q, *could* F. 91. *good*] F, *sweet* Q.  
 94. *meant*] F, *went* Q. 97. *mazzard*] F, *massene* Q. 98. *an*] Capell,  
*and Q, if* F. 101. *'em*] F, *them* Q.

84. *Cain's jaw-bone*] Prof. Skeat (*Notes and Queries*, Aug. 21, 1880) showed that Cain, according to the legend, slew Abel with an ass's jaw-bone. This is mentioned in *Cursor Mundi*, i. p. 71, lines 1071-74 (Early Eng. Text Soc.).

86. *politician*] Clar. Press: "conspirator, schemer, plotter. The word is always used in a bad sense by Shakespeare."

86. *o'er-reaches*] The F *o'er-offices* may be right; *office*, as a verb, occurs in *Coriolanus*, v. ii. 68, and in *All's Well*, iii. ii. 129. *O'er-offices* may mean "treats as one holding a superior

office." *O'er-reaches* is used in the literal sense, and for circumvent.

92.] Steevens compares *Timon of Athens*, i. ii. 216-218.

97. *mazzard*] the head; a form of *mazar*, a bowl; the later Qq alter the misprint of Q *massene* to *mazer*.

101. *loggats*] The game of loggats is described by Clar. Press; the players throw the loggats (little logs), truncated cones of apple-wood, as near the Jack, a wooden wheel, as possible; the floor is strewn with ashes: "perhaps Hamlet meant to compare the skull to the Jack at which the bones were thrown."

First Clo. [Sings.] *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,  
For and a shrouding sheet ;  
Oh, a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.*

105

[*Throws up another skull.*]

*Ham.* There's another ; why may not that be the skull of a lawyer ? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks ? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a 110 dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery ? Hum ! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries ; is this the fine of his fines, and 115 the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt ? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of

105. Throws . . . ] Capell ; omitted Q, F. 106. *may*] Q, *might* F.  
107. *quiddits*] F, *quiddities* Q. 108. *quillets*] F, *quillities* Q. 109. *rude*] F, *madde* Q. 115, 116. *is this . . . recoveries*] F, omitted Q. 117. *his vouchers*] F, *vouchers* Q. 118, 119. *double ones too*] F, *doubles* Q.

103. For and] and moreover ; so Skelton, *Against Garnesche*, "Syr Gawen, Syr Cayus, for and Syr Olyvere" (ed. Dyce, i. 119) ; found also in Middleton and Beaumont and Fletcher.

107. *quiddits*] quiddities, subtleties, from the Schoolmen's *quidditas*, the what-ness, distinctive nature of a thing.

108. *quillets*] frivolous distinctions ; from *quidlibet*.

113. *statutes*] bonds, statutes-merchant or statutes-staple, the nature of which is explained in Thomas Blount's

*Law Dictionary*. "Recognizances," another form of bond. "Fines" and "recoveries," modes of converting an estate tail into a fee-simple. In a recovery with double voucher, two persons are *vouched*, or called on, to warrant the tenant's title.

115. *fine of his fines*] end of his fines.

117. *fine dirt*] Rushton (*Shakespeare, a Lawyer*) thinks that this means the last dirt that will ever occupy his pate.

119. 120. *pair of indentures*] conveyances or contracts, in duplicate,

indentures? The very conveyances of his 120  
lands will hardly lie in this box; and must  
the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

*Hor.* Not a jot more, my lord.

*Ham.* Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

*Hor.* Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too. 125

*Ham.* They are sheep and calves which seek out  
assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow.  
—Whose grave's this, sirrah?

*First Clo.* Mine, sir.—

*Oh, a pit of clay for to be made* 130  
*For such a guest is meet.*

*Ham.* I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in 't.

*First Clo.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore 'tis  
not yours; for my part, I do not lie in 't, and  
yet it is mine. 135

*Ham.* Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't, and say it is  
thine; 'tis for the dead, not for the quick;  
therefore thou liest.

*First Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again,  
from me to you. 140

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for?

*First Clo.* For no man, sir.

*Ham.* What woman, then?

121. *hardly*] F, *scarcely* Q. 125. *calf-skins*] F, *Calves skinnnes* Q. 126.  
*which*] Q, *that* F. 128. *sirrah*] Q, *Sir* F. 129–131. *Mine . . . meet*]  
F, Q (as prose), *Mine sir*, or a . . . made (omitting *For . . . meet*).  
133. *'tis*] Q, *it is* F. 134, 135. *and yet*] F, *yet* Q. 136. *it is*] Q, *'tis* F.

the paper or parchment *indented*, so  
as to be divided into two, which two  
must fit together in proof of genuine-  
ness.

122. *inheritor*] possessor, as in  
*Love's Labour's Lost*, II. i. 5.

127. *assurance*] used in the ordinary  
and the legal sense (conveyance of  
land or tenements by deed).

*First Clo.* For none, neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in 't? 145

*First Clo.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have 150 taken note of it; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

*First Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't 155 that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

*Ham.* How long is that since?

*First Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that; it was the very day that young Hamlet 160

150. *these*] F, *this* Q. 151. *taken*] F, *tooke* Q. 153. *heel*] Q, *heelles* F; *the courtier*] Q, *our Courtier* F. 154. *a*] F (and later Qq), omitted Q. 155. *all*] F, omitted Q. 156. *o'ercame*] F, *overcame* Q. 160. *the very*] F, *that very* Q.

148. *absolute*] positive, decided, free from conditions. See *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 106.

149. *card*] chart; or perhaps the card on which the points of the mariner's compass were marked, as in *Macbeth*, I. iii. 17. The sense "map" or "sea-chart" seems to be the earlier. In any case "to speak by the card" means to speak with exactness to a point.

149. *equivocation*] ambiguity in the use of terms, not necessarily with a view to mislead.

150. *three years*] Q I has "this seaven yeares." It is, perhaps, worth asking whether any allusion can be intended here to the great Poor Law legislation of 1601, when the principle

of taxation for the relief of the poor was fully and finally established. The date is exactly three years before the words appeared in 1604. The purses, if not the kibes, of needy courtiers were galled by the assessments of the overseers. The Act is that of 43 Eliz.; the earlier Act of 39 Eliz. preceded the second Q by seven years, the first Q by six.

151. *picked*] spruce, smart, as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. i. 14. Johnson and Steevens supposed that there was an allusion to *picked* shoes, shoes with long projecting points, "beaks or pykes."

153. *kibe*] chilblain, as in *Tempest*, II. i. 276.



was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

*Ham.* Ay, marry; why was he sent into England?

*First Clo.* Why, because a' was mad: a' shall recover his wits there; or, if a' do not, 'tis no 165 great matter there.

*Ham.* Why?

*First Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

*Ham.* How came he mad?

170

*First Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

*Ham.* How "strangely"?

*First Clo.* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

*Ham.* Upon what ground?

*First Clo.* Why, here in Denmark; I have been 175 sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

161. *is*] Q, *was* F. 165. *'tis*] Q, *it's* F. 168. *him there*] Q, *him* F.  
176. *sexton*] Q 4, *Sexten* Q, *sixeteene* F, *Sextstone* F 2.

169. *as mad as he*] Clar. Press quotes Marston, *Malcontent*, III. i.: "Your lordship shall ever find . . . amongst a hundred Englishmen fourscore and ten madmen." So also Massinger, *A Very Woman*, III. i.: "The fellow [an Englishman] is mad, stark mad. Believe they are all so."

176. *thirty years*] Hamlet's age—thirty—is here fixed in a twofold way—by the date of the grave-digger's service and by the number of years since Yorick's death. Gonzago and his wife, who represent the elder Hamlet and Gertrude, have been married thirty years. It is true, however, that passages in earlier scenes—in particular the scene of Laertes parting from Ophelia—lead us to conceive Hamlet as younger. He is a student of Wittenberg; but it is a

foreign university. Prof. Hales has quoted a passage from Nash, *Pierce Penniless's Supplication*, on the late age at which the Danes commenced education: "You shall see a great boy . . . weeping under the rod when he is thirty years old." In Q 1 Hamlet's age is not fixed, and he seems younger throughout. Perhaps in recasting the play Shakespeare felt that Hamlet's weight of thought implied an age beyond that of very early manhood, and failed to harmonise the earlier and later presentations of his hero. His Troilus is under twenty-three; Florizel looks about twenty-one; Cymbeline's sons are twenty-three and twenty-two; Hamlet is surely older than these youths. The heyday of Gertrude's blood is tame; she may be forty-five



*Ham.* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

*First Clo.* I' faith, if a' be not rotten before a' die,  
—as we have many pocky corpses now-a-days, 180  
that will scarce hold the laying in,—a' will  
last you some eight year or nine year; a  
tanner will last you nine year.

*Ham.* Why he more than another?

*First Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his 185  
trade that a' will keep out water a great  
while; and your water is a sore decayer of  
your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull  
now; this skull has lain in the earth three and  
twenty years. 190

*Ham.* Whose was it?

*First Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was; whose  
do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*First Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 195  
a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head  
once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull,  
the king's jester.

*Ham.* This?

179. *I' faith*] F, *Fayth* Q. 180. *now-a-days*] F, omitted Q. 188, 189.  
*Here's . . . in the*] F, *heer's a skull now hath lyen you i' th* Q. 189, 190.  
*three and twenty*] F, 23 Q, *this dozen years* Q 1 (but in a different connection, and perhaps not Yorick's skull). 197. *This same skull, sir*] Q, words repeated F; *Yorick's*] F, *sir Yoricks* Q.

or forty-six: yet, like Gonzago's wife, perhaps the Danish *Jörg* (George); who is of that age, she may have Magnússon (in *Clar. Press*): perhaps a corruption of Rorick, Saxo's Roricus, Hamlet's maternal grandfather. Furness notes that Jerick is the name of a "Dutch Bowr" in

197. *Yorick's*] Ainger: Yorick is Chapman's *Alphonsus*,

*First Clo.* E'en that.

200

*Ham.* Let me see.—

[*Takes the skull.*]

Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft.—Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord?

*Ham.* Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

*Hor.* E'en so.

220

*Ham.* And smelt so? puh!

[*Puts down the skull.*]

201. *Let me see*] F, omitted Q. *Takes the skull*] Capell (after *This?* line 199); omitted Q, F. 204. *borne*] F, *bore* Q. 205. *now*] Q, omitted F. 205, 206. *in my . . . it is*] Q, *my imagination is*. F. 210, 211. *Not one*] Q, *No one* F. 211. *grinning*] Q, *leering* F. 213. *chamber*] Q 1, F; *table* Q. 221. *so? puh*] F, *so pah* Q, *so? pah* Q 6. *Puts down . . .*] Collier; omitted Q, F.

214. *favour*] commonly used for appearance, aspect; also for beauty, comeliness; also for the countenance, the face.

218. *Alexander*] Perhaps Shakespeare thought of Alexander's beauty and sweet smell as well as of his conquests. North's *Plutarch*: "Alexander had a very faire white colour mingled also with red . . . his skin had a marvellous good favour . . . his bodie had so sweet a smell" that his apparel "took thereof a passing delightful savour." His corpse remained "many days naked without buriall, in a hote drie countrie," yet was "still a cleane and faire corps as could be" (*Life of Alexander*),

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord.

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio!  
Why may not imagination trace the noble  
dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping 225  
a bung-hole?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Ham.* No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him  
thither with modesty enough, and likelihood  
to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander 230  
was buried, Alexander returneth into dust;  
the dust is earth; of earth we make loam;  
and why of that loam, whereto he was con-  
verted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay, 235  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away;

Oh, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,  
Should patch a wall t' expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king,

*Enter Priests, etc. in procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA,  
LAERTES and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN,  
their Trains, etc.*

The queen, the courtiers; who is this they follow? 240  
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken  
The corse they follow did with desperate hand

230. *as thus*] Q 1, F; omitted Q. 231. *into*] F, to Q. 235. *Imperious*] Q, *Imperiall* F. 238. *winter's*] F, *waters* Q. 239. Enter . . .] Malone. Enter K. Q. Laertes and the corse Q. Enter King, Queene, Laertes, and a coffin, with Lords attendant F. 240. *this*] Q, *that* F.

229. *modesty*] moderation, freedom 238. *flaw*] gust. Dyce quotes Cotgrave: "A flaw or gust of wind

235. *Imperious*] Imperial, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, IV. v. 172: "most imperious Agamemnon."

Fordo it own life ; 'twas of some estate  
Couch we awhile, and mark.

[Retiring with Horatio.]

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

245

*Ham.* That is Laertes, a very noble youth : mark.

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

*Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarged

As we have warrantise ; her death was doubtful ;  
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,  
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged 251  
Till the last trumpet ; for charitable prayers,  
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her ;  
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,  
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home 255  
Of bell and burial.

243. *if*] Q, F ; *its* Q 6 ; *it's* Ff 3, 4 ; *of*] Q, omitted F. 244. Retiring . . . ]  
Capell ; omitted Q, F. 248. Priest] F, Doct Q, First Priest Capell.  
249. *warrantise*] Dyce, *warrantis* F, *warrantie* Q, *warranties* Caldecott  
(ed. 2). 251. *have*] F, *been* Q. 252. *prayers*] Q, *prayer* F. 253.  
*Shards*] F, omitted Q. 254. *crants*] Q ; *Rites* F, Q 6 and many editors.

243. *Fordo*] see II. i. 103 ; and for  
*it*, see I. ii. 216.

244. *Couch*] conceal, lurk. Bar-  
rough, *Meth. Physick*, 1610 : "If  
the quantity of humour be great, it  
sometime coucheth itself in some  
principall member."

249. *warrantise*] The word occurs  
in *Sonnets*, cl., and in *1 Henry VI.*  
I. iii. 13. Clar. Press : "The rubric  
before the Burial Office forbids it to  
be used for persons who have laid  
violent hands on themselves."

253. *Shards*] Potsherds.

254. *crants*] wreaths, garlands, or  
perhaps singular, garland (German,  
*Kranz*). *New Eng. Dict.* quotes  
Greene in *Harl. Misc.* II. 246 :  
"The filthy queane wears a craunce,"  
and Nichol, *Progr. Q. Eliz.*, 1596.

Hardiman, *Our Prayer-Book*, 138,  
says : "The crants were garlands  
which it was usual to make of white  
paper, and to hang up in the church  
on the occasion of a young girl's  
funeral. Some of these were hanging  
up in Flamborough Church, York-  
shire, as late as 1850." Many editors  
give F *rites*. See Brand's *Popular*  
*Antiquities*, II. 302.

255. *strewments*] Several passages  
of Shakespeare refer to strewing the  
corpse or the grave with flowers ; in  
*Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 285, we have  
"strewings fitt'st for graves."

255. *bringing home*] Clar. Press  
compares *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. v.  
85-90, adding : "the marriage-rites  
in the case of maidens are sadly  
parodied in the funeral rites."

*Laer.* Must there no more be done?

*Priest.*

No more be done;

We should profane the service of the dead

To sing a requiem and such rest to her

As to peace-parted souls.

*Laer.*

Lay her i' the earth;— 260

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh

May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,

A ministering angel shall my sister be,

When thou liest howling.

*Ham.*

What, the fair Ophelia?

*Queen.* Sweets to the sweet; farewell!

265

[*Scattering flowers.*

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's  
wife;

I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,

And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.*

Oh, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head

Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense 270

Deprived thee of.—Hold off the earth awhile,

Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.

[*Leaps into the grave.*

259. *sing a requiem*] Q, *sing sage* Requiem F. 265. *Sweets . . . farewell*] *Sweets to the sweet, farewell*; Q, *Sweets, to the sweet farewell*. Ff 1, 2, *Sweets, to thee sweet farewell*. Ff 3, 4. *Scattering flowers*] Johnson; omitted Q, F. 268. *have*] Q, *t' have* F; *treble woe*] Q, *terrible woer* F, *terrible woer* Ff 2-4, *treble woes*. Furness (S. Walker conject.). 269. *treble*] F, *doubt* Q. 272. *Leaps . . .*] F (with *in* for *into*), omitted Q.

259. *a requiem*] The "sage requiem" of F has been emended "sad requiem," Collier MS. "such requiem," Dyce conject., Grant White. in hell: "the damned use that word [banished] in hell, Howlings attend it."

264. *howling*] Used also in *Romeo and Juliet*, III. iii. 48, of the outcries 270. *ingenious*] quick in apprehension. Compare *Lear*, IV. vi. 287, 288. Q 6 reads "ingenuous."



Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,  
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made  
 To o'er-top old Pelion or the skyish head 275  
 Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* [*Advancing.*] What is he whose grief  
 Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow  
 Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them  
 stand

Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,  
 Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*]

*Laer.* The devil take thy soul! 280  
 [*Grappling with him.*]

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.  
 I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;  
 For, though I am not splenitive and rash,  
 Yet have I something in me dangerous,  
 Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy hand! 285

*King.* Pluck them asunder.

*Queen.* Hamlet, Hamlet!

*All.* Gentlemen,—

*Hor.* Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out  
 of the grave.*]

276. *Advancing*] Capell; omitted Q, F; *grief*] Q, *griefes* F. 278. *Conjures*] Q, *Conjure* F. 280. *Leaps . . .*] omitted Q, F; Hamlet leaps in after Laertes Q 1; *Grappling*] Rowe; omitted Q, F. 283. *For*] Q, *Sir* F; *and*] F, omitted Q. 284. *something in me*] F, *in me something* Q. 285. *wisdom*] Q 1, Q; *wisenesse* F; *Hold off*] Q, *Away* F. 287. *All. Gentlemen,—*] Malone, *All. Gentlemen.* Q, omitted F. *Hor.*] Q, Gen. F. *The Attendants . . .*] Malone; omitted Q, F.

278. *wandering stars*] Clar. Press 283. *splenitive*] The spleen was the quotes Cotgrave (under *Planette*): seat of anger. Compare 1 *Henry IV*. "they be also called Wandering v. ii. 19. starres."



*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme  
 Until my eyelids will no longer wag.  
*Queen.* O my son, what theme? 290  
*Ham.* I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers  
 Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
 Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?  
*King.* Oh, he is mad, Laertes.  
*Queen.* For love of God, forbear him. 295  
*Ham.* 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do;  
 Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear  
 thyself?  
 Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?

296. 'Swounds] Q, Come F; thou'lt] F, th'owt Q. 297. woo't fast] Q,  
 omitted F. 298. eisel] Theobald, *Esill* Q, *Esile* (italicised) F.

289 *wag*] move; free from its present trivial or ludicrous associations. So "the empress never wags," *Titus Andronicus*, v. ii. 87; and Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, iv. iv. 167.

292. *quantity*] see III. iv. 75; used in depreciatory sense.

297. *Woo't*] Perhaps used to express Hamlet's hurried utterance; but it occurs, *Ant. and Cleop.* iv. ii. 7, and iv. xv. 59, with no such significance. Q 1 has *Wilt*. For *Thou'lt*, line 296, Q has *th'owt*, possibly with the same intention.

298. *eisel*] Criticism has not advanced much beyond Theobald's suggestions of 1733, that the Q *Esill* and F *Esile* mean either eisel, vinegar, or some river; and of the names of rivers none is more plausible than Theobald's "*Yssel*, in the German Flanders." Parallels for the hyperbole of drinking a river can be pointed out in several Elizabethan writers, in Greene's *Orlando Furioso*, in *Eastward Hoe*, and elsewhere. The proposal Nilus has only the crocodile to favour it. An English *Esill* has not been found, though there is an *Iseldun*

(according to Sharon Turner, the Down of the Yssel). On the other hand, it has been shown that "drink up" does not necessarily mean exhaust; it may mean drink eagerly, quaff. In *Sonnets*, cxi., Shakespeare names "potions of eisel" as a bitter and disagreeable remedy for "strong infection." The word was used (see *New Eng. Dict.*) for the vinegar rejected by Christ upon the cross. The chief objection to eisel, vinegar, seems to be, as Theobald puts it, that "the proposition was not very grand." This objection would be met if we could find any special propriety in the proposition. Now vinegar, even in small quantities, as we learn from William Vaughan's *Directions for Health* (ed. 7, 1633, p. 47, first published about 1607), while it allays heat and choler, "hurteth them that be sorrowfull." L. Joubert, Physician to the French King, in his *Seconde Partie des Erreurs Populaires* (Rouen, 1600, p. 135), notes the vulgar error: "Que le vinaigre est la mort de la colere et la vie de la melancholie." There may be irony in Hamlet's choice

I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?  
 To outface me with leaping in her grave? 300  
 Be buried quick with her, and so will I:  
 And, if thou prate of mountains, let them  
 throw  
 Millions of acres on us, till our ground,  
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone,  
 Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth, 305  
 I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness;  
 And thus awhile the fit will work on him;  
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,  
 When that her golden couplets are disclosed,  
 His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, sir; 310  
 What is the reason that you use me thus?  
 I loved you ever.—But it is no matter;  
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
 The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*]

299. *thou*] F, omitted Q. 305. *an*] Pope; *and* Q, F. 306. *Queen*] Q,  
 Kin. F. 307. *thus*] F, *this* Q. 309. *couplets*] Q, *cuplet* F.

of extravagant performances suggested by Laertes' extravagance of grief: Would you artificially heighten your sorrow by a bitter potion of eisel? Would you allay your anger?

298. *eat a crocodile*] Hamlet's challenge to revolting feats—half-passionate, half-ironical—receives more point if we remember that in current natural history the crocodile was a monster of the serpent tribe. See Topsell's *Historie of Serpents*. T. Bright regards the crocodile's bite as poisonous, like an asp's.

306. *madness*] Compare this with Hamlet's apology to Laertes, v. ii.

243, spoken at Gertrude's suggestion.

309. *golden couplets*] The pigeon lays two eggs, and the young, when disclosed or hatched (see III. i. 174), are covered with yellow down.

314. *dog . . . day*] "Bay" has been proposed for *day*, but the saying was proverbial; examples are found both earlier and later than *Hamlet*. The meaning is, "Laertes must have his whine and his bark." Hamlet had previously (I. ii. 153) contrasted himself with Hercules: if Hercules cannot silence dogs, much less I, who am little like that hero.

*King.* I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.— 315

[*Exit Horatio.*

[*To Laertes.*] Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;

We'll put the matter to the present push.—

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—

This grave shall have a living monument:

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see; 320

Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.*

*Ham.* So much for this, sir; now let me see the other;  
You do remember all the circumstance?

*Hor.* Remember it, my lord?

*Ham.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting  
That would not let me sleep; methought I lay 5  
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,—  
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,

315. *you*] F, *thee* Q. 320. *shortly*] F, *thirtie* Q, *thereby* Qq 3-6.

### *Scene II.*

1. *let me*] F, *shall you* Q. 2. *circumstance?*] Theobald; *circumstance*.  
Q, F. 3. *lord?*] F, *Lord*. Q. 6. *bilboes*] F, *bilbo* Q. 6, 7. *Rashly*,—  
. . . *know*,] Furness, *rashly*, *And praysd* . . . *it: let us know*, Q, *rashly*,  
(*And* . . . *it*) *let us know*, F.

317. *present push*] instant forwarding.  
319. *living*] enduring. Moberly:  
"a statue like life itself." Clar. Press  
suggests a double meaning, *enduring*  
(meant for Gertrude), the life of Ham-  
let (for Laertes).

### *Scene II.*

4. *fighting*] So Arden of Feversham,  
III. vi.: "This fighting at my harte."  
6. *mutines in the bilboes*] mutineers

(as in *King John*, II. i. 378) in the  
fettters. Bilbo (of uncertain deriva-  
tion, perhaps named from Bilboa in  
Spain) was a long iron bar, with  
sliding shackles, to confine the ankles,  
a lock fixing one end to the floor.  
The earliest example of the word in  
*New Eng. Dict.* is of 1557 from  
Hakluyt's *Voyages*. See App. III.  
6, 7. *Rashly*] Pope read *Rashness*,  
Tyrwhitt, retaining *Rashly*, and read-

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well  
 When our deep plots do pall; and that should teach us  
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends, 10  
 Rough-hew them how we will.

*Hor.*

That is most certain.

*Ham.* Up from my cabin,

My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark  
 Groped I to find out them; had my desire,  
 Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew 15  
 To mine own room again; making so bold,  
 My fears forgetting manners, to unseal  
 Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,—  
 O royal knavery!—an exact command,  
 Larded with many several sorts of reasons 20  
 Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,  
 With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,

8. *sometimes*] F, *some time* Q. 9. *deep*] Q, *deare* F; *pall*] Q, F, *fall* Qq  
 3-6; *teach*] F, *learn* Q. 13. *me, in the dark*] Q 6, no point in Q, comma  
 only after *darke* F. 17. *unseal*] F, *unfold* Q. 19. *O*] F, *A* Q. 20.  
*reasons*] Q, *reason* F.

ing for it lets, would place *And praised* to *certain*, line 11, in a parenthesis, thus connecting *Rashly* with "up from my cabin."

9. *pall*] Pope read *fail*, and is followed by Capell, Dyce (ed. 2), Furness, Hudson: Ingleby, citing several examples, maintains that *fall* was used by Elizabethan writers where we should use *fail*, and *fall* is the reading here of Qq 3-6. *Pall*, however, to grow vapid and so worthless, occurs in *Ant. and Cleop.* II. vii. 88, "pall'd fortunes," and has here the authority of both Q and F.

10, 11. *ends, Rough-hew*] To *rough-hew*, perhaps originally a carpenter's word, extended its meaning. Thus Florio: "*Abbozzare*, to rough-hew or cast any first draught, to bungle up

ill-favouredly." We do not need the assistance of the dealer in skewers who told Farmer that his nephew could rough-hew them, but that he had himself to shape their ends.

13. *sea-gown*] Singer quotes Cotgrave: "*Esclavine* . . . a sea-gowne, or a coarse, high-collered, and short-sleeved gowne, reaching down to the mid-leg, and used most by sea-men and saylors."

20. *Larded*] see IV. v. 36.

21. *Importing*] concerning. Compare *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. i. 57.

22. *bugs*] bugbears, as in *Taming of the Shrew*, I. ii. 211. In Chapman's *Gentleman Usher*, enter "Sylvan, with a Nymph, a man Bugge and a woman."

That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,  
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,  
My head should be struck off.

*Hor.* Is't possible? 25

*Ham.* Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

*Hor.* I beseech you.

*Ham.* Being thus be-netted round with villanies,—

Ere I could make a prologue to my brains, 30

They had begun the play,—I sat me down,

Devised a new commission, wrote it fair;

I once did hold it, as our statists do,

A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much

How to forget that learning; but, sir, now 35

It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know

The effect of what I wrote?

*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.

27. *me*] F, *now* Q. 28. *I*] *Ay* Capell and several editors. 29-31. *villanies* . . . *I*] Dyce, *villaines*, Or . . . *play*, *I* Q, *villaines*, *Ere* . . . *Play*, *I* F. 37. *effect*] Q, *effects* F.

23. *bated*] deducted; no leisure time is to be taken out of the interval between the supervisal of the commission and Hamlet's execution. *Promptorium Parvulorum*, "Baten or abaten of weyte or mesure, *subtraho*."

29. *villanies*] For instances of the confusion of *villaine* and *villanie* in F, see Sidney Walker, *Criticism on Shakespeare*, ii. 44.

30, 31.] Hamlet's brains operate without any scheme assigned to them by his conscious self. They proceed as players without an argument to the play. See the prologue to *Romeo and Juliet*, where the action of the play is set forth. Theobald, taking *They* as referring to Hamlet's enemies, read (in parenthesis):

"(Ere I could make a prologue, to my Bane

They had begun the Play:)."

33. *statists*] statesmen, as in *Cymbeline*, II. iv. 16. Ritson quotes Florio's *Montaigne*, 1603, p. 125: "I have in my time seene some who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprentice age, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of so vulgar a qualitie."

36. *yeoman's service*] Stevens: "The ancient yeomen were famous for their military valour. 'These were the good archers in times past' says Sir Thomas Smith, 'and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France,'"



*Ham.* An earnest conjuration from the king,  
 As England was his faithful tributary,  
 As love between them like the palm should flourish, 40  
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,  
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities,  
 And many such-like *Ases* of great charge,  
 That, on the view and knowing of these contents,  
 Without debatement further, more or less, 45  
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,  
 Not shriving-time allow'd.

*Hor.* How was this seal'd?

*Ham.* Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.  
 I had my father's signet in my purse,  
 Which was the model of that Danish seal; 50  
 Folded the writ up in the form of the other,  
 Subscribed it, gave 't the impression, placed it safely,

40. *like*] Q, *as* F; *should*] F, *might* Q. 43. *Ases*] Furness, *as* *sir* Q,  
*Assis* F. 44. *knowing of*] Q, *know of* F. 46. *the*] F, *those* Q. 48. *ordi-*  
*nant*] Q, *ordinate* F. 51. *the form*] Q, *form* F. 52. *Subscribed*] F,  
*Subscribe* Q.

42. *comma*] Theobald substitutes *commere*; Hanmer, *cement*; other suggestions are *co-mate*, *column*, *counter*. No emendation is required; the obscurity has arisen through forgetting an earlier meaning of *comma*, a phrase or group of words forming a short member of a sentence or period. The *New Eng. Dict.*, which gives several examples, so explains *comma* in the only other instance in which it is used by Shakespeare—*Timon of Athens*, I. i. 48: "no levelled malice Infects one comma in the course I hold." Here amity begins and amity ends the period, and peace stands between like a dependent clause. Clar. Press, following Johnson, explains otherwise: "comma is used here as opposed to 'period' or full

stop, and in this view a mark of connection, not division"; but there is no suggestion of a full stop here, and a comma in this sense always marks a division; nor is the idea that peace connects amities, but that it derives its force through dependence on mutual love.

43. *Ases*] A quibble, as Johnson notices, between "as" (pronounced *ass* in Warwickshire) and *ass* the beast of burden or *charge*; *charge* being used in the double sense of material burden and moral weight. See *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 184, 185. The quibble of *as*, *ass* is amusingly introduced in Chapman's *Gentleman Usher*, near close of Act III.

50. *model*] counterpart. Malone refers to *Richard II.* III. ii. 153.



The changeling never known. Now, the next day  
Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent  
Thou know'st already. 55

*Hor.* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

*Ham.* Why, man, they did make love to this employ-  
ment;

They are not near my conscience; their defeat  
Does by their own insinuation grow.  
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes 60  
Between the pass and fell incensed points  
Of mighty opposites.

*Hor.* Why, what a king is this!

*Ham.* Does it not, thinks 't thee, stand me now upon—

He that hath kill'd my king and whored my  
mother,

Popp'd in between the election and my hopes, 65

Thrown out his angle for my proper life,

And with such cozenage—is 't not perfect conscience  
To quit him with this arm? and is 't not to be  
damn'd

To let this canker of our nature come

In further evil? 70

54. *sequent*] Q, *sement* F. 56. *So . . . to 't*] Q; in F comma before  
go. 57. *Why . . . employment*] F, omitted Q. 58. *defeat*] Q, *debate* F.  
59. *Does*] Q, *Doth* F. 62. *this 't*] Q, *this*? F. 63. *thinks 't*] S. Walker  
conject., Dyce, *thinke* Q, *thinkst* F; *upon*—] Boswell, *uppon*? Q, *upon* F.  
63–80. *To quit . . . here*?] F, omitted Q.

59. *insinuation*] Malone: "By their having insinuated or thrust  
themselves into the employment." 63. *thinks 't thee*] Walker's cor-  
rection of F; seems it to thee.

61. *pass*] thrust, as in line 170. 63. *stand me now upon*] is it not  
Dyce and other editors hyphen *fell-* incumbent on me, as in *Richard II.*  
*incensed*. II. iii. 138.

62. *opposites*] opponents, as in  
*Twelfth Night*, III. iv. 253.

70. *In*] Into, as in v. i. 300.

*Hor.* It must be shortly known to him from England  
What is the issue of the business there.

*Ham.* It will be short; the interim is mine;  
And a man's life's no more than to say "One."  
But I am very sorry, good Horatio, 75  
That to Laertes I forgot myself;  
For, by the image of my cause, I see  
The portraiture of his; I'll court his favours;  
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Hor.* Peace! who comes here? 80

*Enter OSRIC.*

*Osr.* Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, sir.—[*Aside to Hor.*] Dost  
know this water-fly?

*Hor.* [*Aside to Ham.*] No, my good lord.

*Ham.* [*Aside to Hor.*] Thy state is the more 85  
gracious, for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath  
much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of  
beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's  
mess: 'tis a chough, but, as I say, spacious in  
the possession of dirt. 90

73. *is*] Hanmer, 's F. 74. *life's*] F, *life* Reed and many editors.  
78. *court*] Theobald, *count* F. 80. Enter *Osric*] F 2; Enter a Courtier  
Q; Enter young *Osricke* F. 81. (and later) *Osr.*] F, Cour. Q. 89.  
*say*] Q, *saw* F.

79. *bravery*] bravado, or ostentation. Examples of each meaning are common.

83. *water-fly*] Because the water-fly is a little, skipping, burnished creature, seeming busily idle. See *Troilus and Cressida*, v. i. 38.

89. *chough*] If the Cornish chough (which Ritson says is "pronounced by the natives *chow*") or red-legged crow, be meant, the following, from Carew's *Survey of Cornwall*, 1602 (p. 110, ed. 1811), may be quoted: "His state, when he is kept tame, ungracious, in filching and hiding of money, and such short ends, and somewhat dangerous in carrying sticks of fire." Camden also notices

*Osr.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

*Ham.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit.

Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

*Osr.* I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot. 95

*Ham.* No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

*Osr.* It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

*Ham.* But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

*Osr.* Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 100  
'twere,—I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter—

*Ham.* I beseech you, remember— 105

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*]

*Osr.* Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good

91. *lordship*] Q, *friendship* F. 93. *sir*] Q, omitted F. 94. *Put*] F, omitted Q. 95. *'tis*] F, *it is* Q. 98. *But yet*] Q, omitted F; *sultry*] F, *sully* Q. 98, 99. *hot for my complexion*] F, *hot, or my complexion* Q, *hot, or my complexion*—Warburton and many editors. 101. *But*] F, omitted Q. 104. *matter*—] Rowe; *matter*. Q, F. 105. *Hamlet moves . . .*] Johnson; omitted Q, F. 106. *good my lord*] Q, *in good faith* F; *mine*] F, *my* Q.

his money-loving and his incendiary practices. Chough's "chat" and "gabble" are spoken of in *Tempest*, II. i. 266, and *All's Well*, IV. i. 22. But Caldecott may be right in thinking that here *chuff* may be meant. Furness quotes Cotgrave: "*Franc-goutier*, A substantiall yonker, wealthie chuffe," and "*Maschefouyn*, a chuffe, boore . . . one that is fitter to feed with cattell than to conuerse with men."

95–103.] Theobald noted the parallel in Juvenal, *Sat.* iii.: "*igniculum brumæ si tempore poscas, Accipit endromidem; si dixeris, æstuo, sudat.*"

105. *remember*] So *Love's Labour's*

*Lost*, v. i. 103: "I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy; I beseech thee, apparel thy head." The meaning of the phrase (found also in Johnson and elsewhere) is Remember that you have already complied with the requirement of courtesy; so cover your head.

106. *for mine ease*] the conventional form of reply, when remaining uncovered. Examples are cited from Marston's *Malcontent* (Induction), and Florio's *Second Frutes*: that from Marston (given to Shakespeare's fellow-player William Sly) is one of several reminiscences of Hamlet. Malone inferred that Sly had played

faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing; indeed, to speak 110 feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

*Ham.* Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you; though, I know, to divide him inven- 115 torially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect

107-147. *Sir, here . . . unfellowed*] Q, omitted F, which abbreviates by reading *Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon.* 116. *dizzy*] Q 4, *dosie* Q.

Osric; but Sly also asks Sinklo to "sit between my legs" (a reminiscence of Hamlet and Ophelia), to which Sinklo replies, "the audience will then take me for a viol-de-gambo, and think that you play upon me" (a reminiscence of Hamlet and the two courtiers).

108. *absolute*] consummate, perfect, as in *Merry Wives*, III. iii. 66: "an absolute courtier."

109. *differences*] characteristics (which difference one person from others). In heraldry a difference (alteration of or addition to a coat of arms) distinguishes a junior member or branch of a family from the chief line.

111. *feelingly*] with just perception. Compare *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 172. Q misprints *sellingly*.

111, 112. *card . . . gentry*] card, chart or map (as in v. i. 149) "by which a gentleman should direct his course; the calendar by which he is to choose his time" (Johnson). *Gentry*, courtesy, as in II. ii. 22. Perhaps *card* here means the card of the mariner's compass; *calendar* (useful in navigation with its astronomical

data) was used figuratively as example, model.

112, 113. *continent*] summary, sum and substance of the qualities a gentleman would desire to contemplate, with a play on the geographical meanings of continent and part, suggested by *card*. Nicholson proposes *parts*, as in IV. vii. 74.

114. *definement*] definition. Hamlet uses an affected preciosity; no other example of the word in this sense earlier than 1867 is recorded in *New Eng. Dict.*; no other example in any sense before 1643.

116. *arithmetic*] "The two metaphors (arithmetic and quick sail)," says Clar. Press, "are a little difficult to separate." Perhaps they should rather be united. The *card* and *continent* suggest a voyage to discover Laertes' parts. The arithmetic of memory may be the computations made in a navigator's head; in 1625 T. Addison published his *Arithmetical Navigation*. Q *dosie* is only an obsolete form of *dizzy* (see *New Eng. Dict.*, *dozy*).

117. *yaw*] Qq 3-6 have *raw*, which Johnson explains: "the best

of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, 120 as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

*Osr.* Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

*Ham.* The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the 125 gentleman in our more rawer breath?

*Osr.* Sir?

*Hor.* Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

125. *sir? why*] Capell, *sir, why* Q. 127. *Sir?*] Capell, *Sir*. Q. 129. *tongue?*] Theobald, *tongue*. Q; *You . . . really*] Qq 3-6; *You will too't sir really* Q.

account of him would be *imperfect*"; Heath explains—Laertes was but young (*raw*) in proportion to his progress in accomplishments. To yaw, used of a ship, means to move unsteadily, to diverge from her course; "huc illuc vacillare," says Coles's *Dictionary*. But *neither* means "for all that" (examples in Schmidt's *Sh. Lexicon*, under *neither*). In *respect* of has two meanings in Shakespeare: (1) with regard to, (2) in comparison with. "*His* quick sail" may possibly, as Deighton holds, mean *its*. These are the data for an explanation of Hamlet's jargon; to which it should be added that for *yet* Dyce and others read *it*; *yt*, *it*, being easily mistaken for *yet*; and that Staunton conjectures *wit* for *yet*. The explanation of the text as it stands may be: To enumerate in detail the perfections of Laertes would bewilder the computations of memory, yet for all that—in spite of the calculations—the enumeration would stagger to and fro (and so fall behind) in comparison with Laertes' quick sailing (or, pos-

sibly, considering *its* quick sail, which ought to steady the ship).

119. *article*] business, concern; "of great article," of great moment or importance. See *New Eng. Dict.*, *article*, 10.

120. *infusion . . . rareness*] the qualities infused into him; something higher than acquisition. Sir T. Browne (*Religio Medici*, II. § viii.) would sometimes shut his books, thinking the pursuit of knowledge a vanity, when, wait a little and we shall enjoy knowledge by "instinct and infusion." *Dearth*, dearthness. Bishop Barlow, *Three Sermons* (1596): "Dearth is that, when all things . . . are rated at a high price."

122. *trace*] follow, as in 1 *Henry IV.* III. i. 48.

125. *concernancy*] concernment; another affected word; no other example given in *New Eng. Dict.*

125. *why . . .*] Theobald took these words as spoken of Osric to Horatio; no doubt, erroneously.

128, 129. *Is't . . . tongue*] Johnson conjectured "a mother tongue."



*Ham.* What imports the nomination of this gentle- 130  
man?

*Osr.* Of Laertes?

*Hor.* [*Aside to Ham.*] His purse is empty already;  
all's golden words are spent.

*Ham.* Of him, sir. 135

*Osr.* I know you are not ignorant—

*Ham.* I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if  
you did, it would not much approve me.  
Well, sir?

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes 140  
is—

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare  
with him in excellence; but, to know a man  
well were to know himself.

*Osr.* I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the im- 145  
putation laid on him by them, in his meed he's  
unfellowed.

*Ham.* What's his weapon?

*Osr.* Rapier and dagger.

132. *Laertes?* Q 6, *Laertes*. Q. 136. *ignorant*—] Theobald, *ignorant* Q.  
138, 139. *me. Well, sir?* Globe Sh., *me, well sir*. Q, *me. Well, sir*.  
Theobald. 141. *is*—] Malone, *is*. Q. 145. *for his* Q 6, *for this* Q.  
146. *them, in his meed*] Steevens, *them in his meed*, Q.

Jennens: "understand? In another tongue you" (addressed to Osrice). Malone conjectured: "Is't possible not to understand in a mother tongue?" (addressed to Hamlet). The words are surely addressed to Osrice, and mean "Might you not understand if you used a less affected dialect?" Moberly explains: "Can't you understand your own absurd language on another tongue."

129. *You . . . really*] Theobald read *rarely*. Heath: "You do't, sir,

*rarely*." The words are an ironical encouragement to Osrice to talk like a rational human being—Believe me you will succeed.

138. *approve*] commend.

143. *to know . . . himself*] to know another implies self-knowledge, the height of human wisdom.

145, 146. *imputation*] *repute*, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, i. iii. 339.

146. *meed*] *merit*, as in *3 Henry VI.* iv. viii. 38.



*Ham.* That's two of his weapons ; but, well. 150

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses ; against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so : three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to 155 fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

*Ham.* What call you the carriages ?

*Hor.* [*Aside to Ham.*] I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done. 160

*Osr.* The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

*Ham.* The phrase would be more germane to the matter if we could carry cannon by our sides ; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on : six Barbary horses against six French 165 swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages ; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this " imponed," as you call it ?

151. *hath wagered*] Q, *he's wag'd* F. 152. *he has imponed*] Theobald, *hee has impaund* Q, *he impon'd* F. 154. *hangers*] F, *hanger* Q ; and so] Q, or so F. 159, 160. *Hor.* . . . *done*] Q, omitted F. 161. *carriages*] F, *carriage* Q. 162. *germane*] F 3, *Ierman* Q, *Germaine* F. 163. *cannon*] F, a *cannon* Q. 164. *might be*] F, *be* Q. 165. *on :*] Pope, *on*, Q, *on* F. 167. *bet*] Q, *but* F. 168. *this "imponed"* as] F, *this all* Q.

152. *imponed*] staked. Perhaps Osric's affected pronunciation of *impawned*. Johnson suggested *deponed*. Minsheu gives *deponere* as Latin for stake. 156. *very responsive*] closely corresponding. 157. *liberal conceit*] elaborate design.

154. *assigns*] appurtenances. No other example of this sense in *New Eng. Dict.* 160. *margent*] Explanatory notes often in old books printed in the margin.

154. *hangers*] straps by which the rapier hung from the girdle—often richly ornamented, as that described by Jonson's Matthew (*Every Man in his Humour*, I. iv.), "a hanger . . . 163. *cannon*] Knolles, *History of the Turks*, 1603 : "He commanded the great ordnance to be laid upon carriages."

*Ors.* The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* How if I answer No?

*Ors.* I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

*Ham.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall; if it please his majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

*Ors.* Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

*Ham.* To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

185

169. *sir, that*] Q, *that* F. 170. *yourself*] Q, *you* F. 171, 172. *laid* . . . *nine*] Q, *one twelve for mine* F. 172. *it*] Q, *that* F. 177, 178, *hall*; . . . *majesty, 'tis*] F, *hall, . . . majestie, it is* Q. 180. *purpose*] Theobald; *purpose*; Q, F. 181. *if I*] F, and *I* Q; *I will*] Q, *He* F. 183. *re-deliver . . . so*] F, *deliver you so* Q.

171, 172. *twelve for nine*] The word *passes* seems to mean *passes which count*, the same as hits; the encounter is to continue until one party has made a dozen hits. The King wagers that Laertes—famous as a fencer, and therefore able to afford his rival odds—will not have made his twelve hits until Hamlet's hits are nine; if Hamlet falls short of nine, Laertes wins. Other explanations will be found in Furness. In Q 1 Hamlet asks "And howe's the wager?" The "Bragart Gentleman" replies:

"Mary sir, that yong Leartes in twelve venies

At Rapier and Dagger do not get three oddes of you."

Venue or venny was sometimes used for a hit; more commonly, a bout or a thrust.

173. *answer*] Osric uses the word for encounter. So in the *Paston Letters*, "My Lord the Bastard took upon him to answer xxiv knyts and gentylmen . . . at jostys of pese."

178. *breathing time*] Clar. Press: "the time of relaxation and rest." Breathing time was so used; but this time of relaxation was also the time for recreative exercise. "To breathe" came to mean to exercise briskly (from the quickening of the respiratory organs); so breathing time means a time of intermission from compelled toil and a time of voluntary exercise.

*Osr.* I commend my duty to your lordship.

*Ham.* Yours, yours.—

[*Exit Osr.*

He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

*Hor.* This lapwing runs away with the shell on his 190 head.

*Ham.* He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he, and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on, only got the tune of the time and outward 195 habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

200

187, 188. *Yours . . . does*] F (yours; hee), *Yours doo's* Q. 189. *turn*] Q, *tongue* F. 192. *He . . . with*] F, *A did sir with* Q, *A did so sir with* Qq 3-6. 193. *has*] Q, *had* F; *many*] Q, *mine* F, *nine* F 2. 194. *bevy*] F (*beauty*), *breede* Q. 195. *and outward*] F, *and out of an* Q. 196. *ysty*] F, *histy* Q, *misty* Qq 4-6. 198. *fond and winnowed*] F, *prophane and trennowed* Q. 199. *trial*] Q, *tryalls* F.

190. *lapwing*] So Meres, *Wit's Treasury*: "As the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head as soon as she is hatched"; hence a forward, conceited youngster. Clar. Press adds insincere, the lapwing crying far from its nest to mislead intruders. See *Measure for Measure*, I. iv. 32.

192. *comply with*] see II. ii. 394.

195, 196. *outward . . . encounter*] exterior manner of address.

196. *ysty collection*] frothy aggregation (of empty knowledge, like a mass of bubbles).

198. *fond and winnowed opinions*] Warburton's emendation *fann'd* is apt, and has found many supporters. Tschischwitz proposes *profound* for Q *fanned*, the same remains the meaning.

*nouned* in later Quartos, and *renowned* in Q 1676. Fleay proposes *fond unwinnowed*. Moberly explains: "frothy expressions suited to express the absurdest and most over-refined notions"; Clar. Press: "The metaphor is a mixed one . . . Osrice, and others like him, are compared to the chaff which mounts higher than the sifted wheat, and to the bubbles which rise to the surface through the deeper water." The metaphor in "winnowed" seems to me incidental and latent; the meaning is "Their frothy acquisitions carry them successfully through the slight judgments of the most exquisite arbiters *elegantiarum*." If we read *fanned*, the same remains the meaning.

*Enter a Lord.*

*Lord.* My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him that you attend him in the hall; he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time. 205

*Ham.* I am constant to my purposes; they follow the king's pleasure; if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

*Lord.* The king, and queen, and all are coming 210 down.

*Ham.* In happy time.

*Lord.* The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play. 215

*Ham.* She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

*Hor.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how 220 ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, good my lord,—

201-216. Enter . . . *instructs me*] Q, omitted F. 214. *fall*] Q, *goe* Qq 4-6. 220. *But*] F, omitted Q. 220, 221. *how ill all's*] Q, *how all* F. 223. *lord,—*] Capell; *lord.* Q, F.

206. *purposes*] Walker: "note the double meaning." Tschischwitz: "Hamlet's *purpose* is unchanged to kill the King . . . when the King is *fit* for it in the hour of his unholy *pleasure*." 212. *In happy time*] like *à la bonne heure*; as in *Othello*, III. i. 32. 220. *odds*] Malone: "With the advantage that I am allowed."

*Ham.* It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman. 225

*Hor.* If your mind dislike any thing, obey it; I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

*Ham.* Not a whit; we defy augury; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be 230 now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all; since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be. 235

*Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with foils and gauntlets: a table and flagons of wine on it.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.  
[*The King puts the hand of Laertes into that of Hamlet.*

225. *gain-giving*] F, *gamgiving* Q, *game-giving* Qq 4-6. 226. *it*] Q, omitted F. 229. *there's a*] F, *there is* Q. 231. *now*] F, omitted Q. 233-235. *the readiness . . . Let be*] Caldecott; *The readiness is all, since no man of ought he leaves, knowes what ist to leave betimes, let be.* Q; *The readinesse is all, since no man ha's ought of what he leaves. What is't to leave betimes?* F. 235. *Enter King . . .*] F (substantially); A table prepared, Trumpets, Drums, and Officers with Cushions, King, Queene, and all the state, Foiles, daggers, and Laertes. Q. 236. *The King . . .*] Johnson (substantially); omitted Q, F.

225. *gain-giving*] misgiving; But the idea of F is vulgarised by reducing it formed like *gainsay*.

233, 234. *since . . . betimes*] Many editors follow Warburton, who punctuates Q thus: "Since no man, of ought he leaves, knows, what." Johnson read "knows aught of." The Q certainly gives a fine and characteristic meaning; since no man knows what life may bring, since no

man can solve its mysteries. But the idea of F is vulgarised by reducing it to "If a man cannot carry away with him life's goods"; it is rather: If we possess nothing except our personality, what matters it to leave the adventitious things of life soon or late. Hanmer read "Since no man owes aught of what he leaves."



*Ham.* Give me your pardon, sir ; I've done you wrong ;  
 But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.  
 This presence knows,  
 And you must needs have heard, how I am  
 punish'd 240  
 With sore distraction. What I have done,  
 That might your nature, honour and exception  
 Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.  
 Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes ? Never Hamlet ;  
 If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away, 245  
 And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,  
 Then Hamlet does it not ; Hamlet denies it.  
 Who does it then ? His madness ; if't be so,  
 Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd ;  
 His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy. 250  
 Sir, in this audience,  
 Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil  
 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,  
 That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,  
 And hurt my brother.

237. *I've*] F, *I have* Q. 241. *sore*] F, a *sore* Q. 248. *madness* ;  
*madnesse*. Q, *Madnesse* ? F. 251. *Sir . . . audience*] F, omitted Q.  
 254. *mine*] F, *my* Q. 255. *brother*] Q I, Q ; *Mother* F.

239. *presence*] royal and courtly assembly ; frequent in Shakespeare.

242. *exception*] disapproval. Compare *All's Well* I, ii. 40.

255. *brother*] The F *mother* is almost certainly a mere printer's error ; yet it is worth considering that Hamlet has been requested by his mother to "use some gentle entertainment to Laertes" ; that the speech, in complying with her request, merely develops her words in the last scene, "This is mere madness, etc." ; that it is spoken not without the character-

istic irony of adopting another's point of view ; that Hamlet twice before has pointed his indifference to the King by expressed deference to his mother ; and that he might ironically apologise for his apology (which Johnson thought unworthy of him as lacking sincerity) by hinting at the close why it was made and made in the desired form—"And hurt—my mother" (with a slight salutation towards Gertrude). Can it be that this reading of F was an afterthought of Shakespeare ?



*Laer.* I am satisfied in nature, 255  
 Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most  
 To my revenge; but in my terms of honour  
 I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation,  
 Till by some elder masters of known honour  
 I have a voice and precedent of peace, 260  
 To keep my name ungored. But till that time  
 I do receive your offer'd love like love,  
 And will not wrong it.

*Ham.* I embrace it freely,  
 And will this brother's wager frankly play.—  
 Give us the foils.—Come on.

*Laer.* Come, one for me. 265

*Ham.* I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance  
 Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,  
 Stick fiery off indeed.

*Laer.* You mock me, sir.

*Ham.* No, by this hand. 269

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,  
 You know the wager?

*Ham.* Very well, my lord;  
 Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

261. *keep*] F, omitted Q; *ungored*] Q, *ungorg'd* F; *till*] F, *all* Q. 263. *I*] Q, *I do* F. 265. *Come on*] F, omitted Q. 267. *darkest*] Q, F; *brightest* Ff 2-4. 271. *wager*] Capell; *wager*. Q, F. 272. *hath*] F, *has* Q.

255. *nature*] Hamlet has referred to "nature" and "honour"; Laertes replies as to each point.

260. *voice and precedent*] authoritative pronouncement, justified by precedent, on the question whether an insult by one distracted should be formally resented. Laertes' words—spoken by an assassin—are wholly insincere.

268. *Stick fiery off*] stand out brilliantly. For "darkest," changed in F 2 to "brightest," see *Ant. and Cleop.* I. iv. 13.

272. *odds*] three points given to Hamlet, who is assumed to be the less skilled. Supposed, erroneously, by some to refer to the greater value of the King's stake.

*King.* I do not fear it; I have seen you both;

But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

*Laer.* This is too heavy; let me see another. 275

*Ham.* This likes me well.—These foils have all a  
length? [They prepare to play.

*Osr.* Ay, my good lord.

*King.* Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.—

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,

Or quit in answer of the third exchange, 280

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;

The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;

And in the cup an union shall he throw,

Richer than that which four successive kings

In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the  
cups; 285

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,

The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to  
earth,

"Now the king drinks to Hamlet!"—Come,  
begin;—

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye. 290

*Ham.* Come on, sir.

*Laer.* Come, my lord. [They play.

274. *better'd*] F, *better* Q. 276. *length?*] Rowe; *length.* Q, F.  
283. *union*] F, *Vnion* Q, *Onixe* Qq 3-6. 286. *trumpet*] Q, *trumpets* F.  
289.] Trumpets the while (stage direction) Q, omitted F. 291. *Come, my  
lord*] Q, *Come on sir* F.

274. *better'd*] not naturally superior,  
trained by Parisian fencers.

280. *quit*] pay off scores.

283. *union*] Malone quotes Florio:  
"Vnion . . . Also a faire, great,  
orient pearle, called an vnion."

Steevens quotes Holland's *Pliny*:  
"Vnions, as a man would say,  
Singular, and by themselves alone."  
Pliny tells of Cleopatra's dissolving a  
pearl in vinegar, and drinking it.

286. *kettle*] see I. iv. II.

*Ham.* One.  
*Laer.* No.  
*Ham.* Judgment.  
*Osr.* A hit, a very palpable hit.  
*Laer.* Well; again.  
*King.* Stay; give me drink.—Hamlet, this pearl is  
 thine;  
 Here's to thy health.—  
 [Trumpets sound, and cannons shot off within.  
 Give him the cup.  
*Ham.* I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.— 295  
 Come. [They play.  
 Another hit; what say you?  
*Laer.* A touch, a touch, I do confess.  
*King.* Our son shall win.  
*Queen.* He's fat, and scant of breath.—  
 Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows;  
 The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet. 300  
*Ham.* Good madam!  
*King.* Gertrude, do not drink!  
*Queen.* I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.  
*King.* [Aside.] It is the poison'd cup! it is too late!  
*Ham.* I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

294. Trumpets . . .] Malone. Drum, trumpets and shot. Florish, a  
 peece goes off. Q (after *hit*, line 292), Trumpets sound, and shot goes off. F  
 (after *cup*). 295. *set it*] Q, *set* F. 296. *Come.*] *Come*: F, *Come*, Q.  
 297. *A touch, a touch,*] F, omitted Q; *confess*] F, *confest* Q. 299. *Here*  
 . . . *napkin*] Q, *Heere's a napkin* F. 301. *madam!*] Dyce; *Madam*. Q,  
 F; *Madam*—Rowe. 303, 307. *Aside*] Rowe.

293. *pearl*] In fact the poison. See acted the character of Hamlet." H.  
 line 337. Wyeth proposes *faint*; Plehwe, re-  
 298. *fat*] Clar. Pres.: "There is ferring to IV. vii. 158, conjectures *hot*.  
 a tradition that this line was appro- 299. *napkin*] handkerchief, as in  
 priate to Richard Burbage, who first *Othello*, III. iii. 290.

*Queen.* Come, let me wipe thy face. 305

*Laer.* My lord, I'll hit him now.

*King.* I do not think 't.

*Laer.* [*Aside.*] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

*Ham.* Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afeard you make a wanton of me. 310

*Laer.* Say you so? come on. [*They play.*]

*Osr.* Nothing, neither way.

*Laer.* Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling,  
they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds*

*Laertes.*

*King.* Part them! they are incensed.

*Ham.* Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*]

*Osr.* Look to the queen there, ho!

*Hor.* They bleed on both sides. — How is it, my lord? 315

307. 'tis . . . 'gainst] F, it is . . . against Q. 308. third . . . you] Steevens, third Laertes, you doe Q, third. Laertes, you F. 310. afeard] F, sure Q. 313. Laertes wounds . . .] Rowe, omitted Q. In scuffling they change Rapiers F; They catch one anothers Rapiers, and both are wounded, Leartes falles downe, the Queene falles downe and dies Q 1. 314. come, again] F; come againe Q, Ff 2-4. The Queen falls] Capell; omitted Q, F. 315. is it] Q, is't] F.

310. wanton] treat me like an indulged boy.

313. Stage direction] Of several methods of exchanging rapiers adopted by actors, or described by commentators, that suggested by H. von Friesen (*Sh. Jahrbuch*, 1869) seems to accord best with the stage direction of Q 1. The writer derives it from his recollections of the fencing-school. "As soon as your opponent has made a pass, and is about to return to his guard, you strike the most powerful *battute* possible (*i.e.* a

blow descending along the blade of your opponent) . . . advance the left foot close to the outer side of the right foot of your opponent, seize with the left hand the guard of your opponent's rapier. . . . The opponent meets the attack with the same manœuvre, and gets his assailant's weapon in his hand in the same way." The combatants change places, and continue to fight. (Furness's translation abbreviated.)

314. ho!] Supposed by Staunton to be a signal to stop the combat.

*Osr.* How is 't, Laertes?

*Laer.* Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,  
Osrice;

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

*Ham.* How does the queen?

*King.* She swoonds to see them bleed.

*Queen.* No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear  
Hamlet,— 320

The drink, the drink!—I am poison'd. [*Dies.*

*Ham.* O villany!—Ho! let the door be lock'd:

Treachery! seek it out! [*Laertes falls.*

*Laer.* It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;  
No medicine in the world can do thee good; 325

In thee there is not half an hour of life;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and envenom'd; the foul practice

Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again; thy mother's poison'd; 330

I can no more.—The king, the king's to  
blame.

*Ham.* The point envenom'd too!—

Then, venom, to thy work! [*Stabs the King.*

*All.* Treason! treason!

*King.* Oh, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt. 335

317. *mine own*] Q, *mine* F. 321. *Dies*] Rowe; omitted Q, F. 322.  
*Ho*] Theobald, *how* Q, *hoe* Q 4, *How?* F. 323. *Laertes falls*] Capell;  
omitted Q, F. 324. *here, Hamlet.* *Hamlet*] F, *heere Hamlet*, Q.  
326. *hour of*] F, *houres* Q. 327. *thy*] F, *my* Q. 333. *Stabs the King*]  
Rowe, *Hurts the King* F, omitted Q.

317. *woodcock*] see i. iii. 115.

328. *Unbated*] see iv. vii. 139.

328. *practice*] artifice, stratagem.

See iv. vii. 68.

332. *The point*] Staunton supposes

Hamlet first to note that the button  
is gone, and reads, "The point—  
envenom'd too!"

333. *to thy work*] Theobald (ed. 2)  
read "do thy work."

*Ham.* Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,  
 Drink off this potion! Is thy union here?  
 Follow my mother! [*King dies.*]

*Laer.* He is justly served;  
 It is a poison temper'd by himself.—  
 Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet; 340  
 Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,  
 Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*]

*Ham.* Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.—  
 I am dead, Horatio.—Wretched queen, adieu!—  
 You that look pale and tremble at this chance, 345  
 That are but mutes or audience to this act,  
 Had I but time (as this fell sergeant, death,  
 Is strict in his arrest) oh, I could tell you—  
 But let it be.—Horatio, I am dead;  
 Thou livest; report me and my cause aright 350  
 To the unsatisfied.

*Hor.* Never believe it;  
 I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;  
 Here's yet some liquor left.

*Ham.* As thou'rt a man,  
 Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I'll have 't.—

336. *Here*] F, *Heare* Q (= here?); *murderous*] F, omitted Q. 337. *off*] F, *of* Q (= off?); *union*] Q 1, F; *the Onixe* Q. 338. *King dies*] F, omitted Q. 342. *Dies*] F, omitted Q. 348. *you—*] Pope, *you*, Q, *you*. F. 350. *cause aright*] Q, *causes right* F. 351. *Never believe*] Q, F; *Never*; *believe* Hammer.

337. *union*] see line 283. Caldecott suggests a play on the word; the potion effects the union of the King and Queen.

346. *mutes*] performers in a play who have no words. The word occurs in the stage direction for the dumb-show preceding the play, Act III. ii. 146.

347. *sergeant*] Malone compares Silvester's *Du Bartas*: "And Death, drad Serjant of th' eternall Iudge," and Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, lxxiv.: "when that fell arrest Without all bail shall carry me away." "Sergeants" is of frequent occurrence in Elizabethan literature as the name for officers who arrest debtors.



O good Horatio, what a wounded name, 355  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind  
me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in  
pain,

To tell my story.—

[*March afar off, and shot within.*

What war-like noise is this? 360

*Osr.* Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from  
Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives  
This war-like volley.

*Ham.* Oh, I die, Horatio;

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit;  
I cannot live to hear the news from England; 365  
But I do prophesy the election lights  
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;  
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,  
Which have solicited—the rest is silence. [*Dies.*

355. *good Horatio*] F, *god Horatio* Q, *God Horatio* Qq 4-6, *God!*—*Horatio* Capell. 356. *live*] F, *I leave* Q; *me* [] Jennens, *me?* Q, *me.* F. 360. *March* . . .] Steevens, *A march a farre off* Q, *March afarre off, and shout within* F. 369. *solicited*—] Jennens, *solicited*, Q, *solicited.* F; *silence.*] Q, *silence.* O, o, o, o. F; *Dies*] F, omitted Q.

356. *shall live*] Staunton in support of F cites *Much Ado*, III. i. 110: "No glory lives behind the back of such." him." Qq 4-6, Pope, and other editors read *ore-growes*.

364. *o'er-crows*] triumphs over (as a victorious cock). To several examples cited by Steevens and Malone, add *The Spanish Mandevile*, 1618, p. 135: "Being somewhat haughtie, and suffering no man to overcrow

368. *occurrents*] occurrences, incidents. Beaumont and Fletcher, *Beggar's Bush*, I. i.: "kept me stranger . . . to all the occurrents of my country."

369. *solicited*] invited, prompted, as in *Richard II.* I. ii. 2.

*Hor.* Now cracks a noble heart.—Good night, sweet prince,  
 And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!—  
 Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*]

*Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, with drum, colours, and attendants.*

*For.* Where is this sight?

*Hor.* What is it ye would see?  
 If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

*For.* This quarry cries on havoc.—O proud Death! 375  
 What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,  
 That thou so many princes at a shot  
 So bloodily hast struck?

*First Amb.* The sight is dismal;  
 And our affairs from England come too late;  
 The ears are senseless that should give us hearing, 380  
 To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,  
 That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.  
 Where should we have our thanks?

*Hor.* Not from his mouth,  
 Had it the ability of life to thank you;  
 He never gave commandment for their death. 385

370. *cracks*] Q, *cracke* F. 372. *March within*] Capell; omitted Q, F.  
*Enter Fortinbras . . .*] F (substantially). *Enter Fortenbrasse, with the*  
*Embassadors.* Q. 373. *ye*] F, *you* Q. 375. *This*] Q, *His* F. 378. *First*]  
 Capell; omitted Q, F.

370. *cracks*] So *Coriolanus*, v. iii.  
 9: "with a crack'd heart."

371. *sing*] Warburton reads *wing*.

375. *This quarry . . . havoc*] *His*  
 of F may refer to Death. White's  
 explanation seems right: "This heap  
 of dead proclaims an indiscriminate  
 slaughter." For "cry on" compare

*Othello*, v. i. 48, *Richard III.* v. iii.  
 231. Clar. Press: "This pile of  
 corpses urges to merciless slaughter."

376. *toward*] see I. i. 77.

376. *eternal*] Perhaps used in the  
 sense which expresses abhorrence;  
 see note on I. v. 21.

383. *his mouth*] The King's mouth.

But since, so jump upon this bloody question,  
 You from the Polack wars, and you from England,  
 Are here arrived, give order that these bodies  
 High on a stage be placed to the view ;  
 And let me speak to the yet unknowing world 390  
 How these things came about ; so shall you hear  
 Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,  
 Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,  
 Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,  
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook 395  
 Fall'n on the inventors' heads : all this can I  
 Truly deliver.

*For.* Let us haste to hear it,  
 And call the noblest to the audience.  
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune ;  
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom, 400  
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me,  
*Hor.* Of that I shall have also cause to speak,  
 And from his mouth whose voice will draw on  
 more ;  
 But let this same be presently perform'd,  
 Even while men's minds are wild ; lest more  
 mischance, 405

390. *to the yet*] F, *to yet* Q. . 394. *forced cause*] F, *for no cause* Q.  
 400. *rights*] Q, *Rites* F. 401. *now to*] Q, *are to* F. 402. *shall have*  
*also*] Q, *shall have always* F. 403. *on more*] F, *no more* Q. 405.  
*while*] Q, *whiles* F.

386. *jump*] see I. i. 65.  
 392. *carnal*] changed to *cruell* in  
 Qq 4, 5. This line refers to the  
 King's incestuous marriage and the  
 murder of his brother ; the next, to  
 the death of Ophelia (accidental  
 judgments) and of Polonius (casual  
 slaughter) ; that which follows, to the

deaths of Rosencrantz and Guilden-  
 stern.

394. *put on*] instigated. Compare  
*Coriolanus*, II. i. 272 ; for other  
 examples see Schmidt.

400. *of memory*] traditional and  
 remembered.

On plots and errors, happen.

*For.*

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;

For he was likely, had he been put on,

To have proved most royally : and for his passage,

The soldiers' music and the rites of war 410

Speak loudly for him.—

Take up the bodies.—Such a sight as this

Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.—

Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*[A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the bodies ;  
after which a peal of ordnance is shot off.]*

409. *royally*] F, *royall* Q. 410. *rites*] F, *right* Q. 412. *bodies*] Q,  
*body* F. 414. Stage direction] Capell (substantially); Exeunt Q; Exeunt  
Marching : after the which, a Peale of Ordenance are shot off. F.

406. *On*] Perhaps "as the consequence of "; perhaps "on the top of."  
408. *put on*] set to work (as King), brought to trial.

409. *passage*) departure, as in III. iii. 86.

## APPENDIX I

THE "TRAVELLING" OF THE PLAYERS (II. ii. 347).

Q 1 (1603) reads as follows:

*Ham.* How comes it that they travell? Do they grow  
restie?

*Gil.* No my Lord, their reputation holds as it was wont.

*Ham.* How then?

*Gil.* Yfaith my Lord, noveltie carries it away,  
For the principall publike audience that  
Came to them, are turned to private playes,  
And to the humour of children.

Q (1604):

*Ham.* How chanches it they trauaile? their residence both  
in reputation, and profit was better both wayes.

*Ros.* I thinke their inhibition, comes by the meanes of the  
late innouasion.

*Ham.* Doe they hold the same estimation they did when  
I was in the Citty; are they so followed.

*Ros.* No indeed are they not.

F (1623) repeats Q (1604) so far, and adds all that  
follows as given in the text (pp. 79-81) to and including  
the words "Hercules and his load too."

The discussion of this matter by Prof. W. Hall Griffin  
in *The Academy*, April 25, 1896, seems to me highly  
satisfactory. At Michaelmas 1600 Henry Evans took  
possession of the Blackfriars Theatre,—a private theatre,—  
which he leased from Richard Burbage, and there he set  
up "a companie of boyes," who became exceedingly  
popular. This is referred to in Q. 1.

Q (1604) refers to an inhibition and an innovation. Probably this is a veiled allusion to the popularity of the children, an innovation, which had almost the effect of an inhibition. If we must find an express inhibition, that due to the visitation of the Plague, 1603, may answer the purpose. In January 1604 the children became "the Children of her Majesty's Revels"; in 1603 Shakespeare's company became the King's servants. It was inexpedient that the King's servants should censure the Queen's children. Hence the omission of any reference to boy actors in Q 1604.

The passage in F refers not only to boy actors, but probably also to the "war of the theatres," in which Jonson, Marston, Dekker took prominent parts. The children performed *Cynthia's Revels*, 1600, and *The Poetaster*, 1601. Jonson admits that he had "tax'd" the players, but only some of them, and that "sparingly" (see Apologetically Dialogue appended to *The Poetaster*). A far less probable suggestion as to the "inhibition" is, that it refers to the disgrace of Shakespeare's company at court in 1601, owing to the share they had taken, by a performance of *Richard II.*, in the conspiracy of Essex. See S. Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 213-217.

[See, for a new view, an article ("The Date of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*") in *Shakespeare's Workshop*, 1928, in which Mr. W. J. Lawrence argues that "the tragedians of the city" (II. ii. 346) have been wrongly identified with the Lord Chamberlain's men, "who never travelled save under the compulsion of the plague," and that Rosencrantz's explanation, "I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation," was inspired by the Privy Council order of June 22, 1600, "limiting the number of playhouses to two, and forbidding all acting in London (*i.e.* all professional acting: the boys were looked upon as amateurs) save by the Globe and Fortune players, under penalty of imprisonment," in consequence of which "there must have been an immediate exodus into the country." When, as events showed, the order was not enforced, it was necessary, in



Mr. Lawrence's view, to give another reason "for the travelling of the tragedians," which was done "none too aptly," by imputing it to the rivalry of the children. If, however, this is not too apt in respect of "inhibition," it accords very well with loss of "estimation." Mr. Lawrence regards the F passage (ll. 355-383) as an interpolation for this purpose, which "could not have been written before May or June 1601," and, as further proof of interpolation, argues that Hamlet's speech, "It is not very strange," etc., is not a reply to Rosencrantz's last, "Ay, that they [the boys] do, my lord; Hercules and his load too," but rather to line 354, "No, indeed, they are not." From Hamlet, however, the answer seems to me to be probable enough, and the thought of the boys may have called up in his mind the thought of the King's "picture in little." R. H. C.]

## APPENDIX II

### SOME PASSAGES FROM THE QUARTO OF 1603

IT may be of interest to give a few passages from the Quarto of 1603, which differ considerably from the received text, or are wholly absent from it. For II. i. 77-100 the Q 1603 gives:

*Of.* O yong Prince *Hamlet*, the only floure of *Denmark*,  
Hee is bereft of all the wealth he had,  
The Jewell that ador'nd his feature most  
Is filcht and stolne away, his wit's bereft him,  
Hee found mee walking in the gallery all alone,  
There comes hee to mee with a distracted looke,  
His garters lagging downe, his shooes untide,  
And fixt his eyes so stedfast on my face,  
As if they had vow'd, this is their latest obiect.  
Small while he stoode, but gripes me by the wrist,  
And there he holdes my pulse till with a sigh  
He doth unclaspe his holde, and parts away  
Silent, as is the mid time of the night:  
And as he went, his eie was still on mee,  
For thus his head over his shoulder looked,  
He seemed to finde the way without his eies:  
For out of doores he went without their helpe,  
And so did leave me.

III. ii. 53. The Quarto 1603 adds to Hamlet's criticism of the Stage Clown the following:

And then you have some agen, that keepes one sute  
Of ieasts, as a man is knowne by one sute of  
Apparell, and Gentlemen quotes his ieasts downe  
In their tables, before they come to the play, as thus!

Cannot you stay till I eate my porridge? and, you  
owe me

A quarters wages: and, my coate wants a cullison:  
And your beere is sowre: and, blabbering with his  
lips,

And thus keeping in his cinkapase of ieasts,  
When, God knows, the warme Clowne cannot make a  
iest,

Vnlesse by chance, as the blinde man catcheth a  
hare:

Maisters tell him of it.

Dr. B. Nicholson has argued that Kemp is the clown specially hit at; he had left Shakespeare's company. When he returned, these specialised jests were omitted. Dr. Nicholson further argues that the praise of Yorick is the praise of Tarlton, who died in 1588, and that on Kemp's return to the company the praise of Tarlton was made less pointed by altering the period during which Yorick's skull had lain in the earth from twelve to twenty-three years.

III. iii. 36-72. Q. 1603 reads:

*King.* O that this wet that falles upon my face  
Would wash the crime cleere from my conscience!  
When I looke up to heaven, I see my trespasse,  
The earth doth still crie out upon my fact,  
Pay me the murder of a brother and a king,  
And the adulterous fault I have committed:  
O these are sinnes that are unpardonable:  
Why say thy sinnes were blacker then is ieat,  
Yet may contrition make them as white as snowe:  
I but still to perseuer in a sinne,  
It is an act gainst the universall power,  
Most wretched man, stoope, bend thee to thy prayer,  
Aske grace of heaven to keepe thee from despaire.

III. iv. 136. From *Exit Ghost* to the close of the scene  
Q 1603 gives the following:

*Queene.* Alas, it is the weaknesse of thy braine,  
Which makes thy tongue to blazon thy hearts griefes:

But as I have a soule, I sweare by heaven,  
 I never knew of this most horride murder :  
 But Hamlet, this is onely fantasie,  
 And for my love forget these idle fits.

*Ham.* Idle, no mother, my pulse doth beate like yours,  
 It is not madnesse that possesseth Hamlet.  
 O mother, if ever you did my deare father love,  
 Forbeare the adulterous bed to night,  
 And win your selfe by little as you may,  
 In time it may be you wil lothe him quite :  
 And mother, but assist mee in revenge,  
 And in his death your infamy shall die.

*Queene.* Hamlet, I vow by that majesty,  
 That knowes our thoughts, and lookes into our hearts,  
 I will conceale, consent, and doe my best,  
 What stratagem soe're thou shalt devise.

*Ham.* It is enough, mother, good night :  
 Come sir, I'le provide you a grave,  
 Who was in life, a foolish prating knave.

The following is absent from the later texts, but the information here given by Horatio to the Queen is given by Hamlet to Horatio in the received text in v. ii. This scene follows IV. v. :

*Enter HORATIO and the QUEENE.*

*Hor.* Madame, your sonne is safe arriv'de in *Denmarke*,  
 This letter I even now receiv'd of him,  
 Whereas he writes how he escap't the danger,  
 And subtile treason that the king had plotted,  
 Being crossed by the contention of the windes,  
 He found the Packet sent to the king of *England*,  
 Wherein he saw himselfe betray'd to death,  
 As at his next conversion with your grace,  
 He will relate the circumstance at full.

*Queene.* Then I perceive there's treason in his looks  
 That seem'd to sugar o're his villanie :  
 But I will soothe and please him for a time,  
 For murderous mindes are always jealous,  
 But know not you *Horatio* where he is ?

*Hor.* Yes Madame, and he hath appoynted me  
To meete him on the east side of the Cittie  
To morrow morning.

*Queene.* O faile not, good *Horatio*, and withall, commend me

A mothers care to him, bid him a while  
Be wary of his presence, lest that he  
Faile in that he goes about.

*Hor.* Madam, never make doubt of that:  
I thinke by this the news be come to court:  
He is arriv'de, observe the king, and you shall  
Quickely finde *Hamlet* being here,  
Things fell not to his minde.

*Queene.* But what became of *Gilderstone* and *Rossencraft*?

*Hor.* He being set ashore, they went for *England*,  
And in the Packet there writ down that doome  
To be perform'd on them that poynted for him:  
And by great chance he had his fathers seale,  
So all was done without discoverie.

*Queene.* Thankes be to heaven for blessing of the prince,  
*Horatio* once againe I take my leave,  
With thowsand mothers blessings to my sonne.

*Hor.* Madam adue.

## APPENDIX III

### ADDENDA

MR. W. J. CRAIG, who in knowledge of the language of Shakespeare is, I believe, unsurpassed by any living student, has read the proof-sheets of this edition (not always agreeing with my interpretations), has noted omissions, and has sent me a mass of valuable illustrations and additions, from which I make a scanty selection.

I. i. 106: *head*, source, as in *All's Well*, I. iii. 178, "Your salt tears' head." Hence origin, cause. Compare II. ii. 55.

I. i. 166: *russet*, probably gray turning to gold or to red. Latham's *Johnson's Dictionary* notices that Sir I. Newton uses russet for gray.

I. ii. 4: *one brow of woe*. Brow, aspect, look. See Schmidt's *Lexicon*.

I. ii. 100: *peevisish*, foolish, silly, as in *Comedy of Errors*, IV. i. 93.

I. iii. 56: *shoulder of your sail*. Shoulder, the back. See Schmidt's *Lexicon*.

I. v. 48: *dignity*, worth, excellence. See *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV. iii. 236.

I. v. 97: *globe*. Schmidt thinks this may mean the world; Mr. Craig suggests this little world of man. Compare *Lear*, III. i. 10.

I. v. 116. Compare Marston, *The Dutch Courtezan*, I. ii. "Wha, ho, ho! come, bird, come."



I. v. 133: *whirling words*. Schmidt defines whirling "giddy." Mr. Craig prefers F *hurling*. But compare 1 *Henry VI*. I. v. 19, "My thoughts are whirl'd like a potter's wheel."

I. v. 150: *truepenny*. Mr. Craig notes "old truepenny" as occurring in *The Returne from Pernassus*, II. iv., and Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Loyal Subject*, I. iii.; he adds that Truepenny is the name of a character in *Ralph Roister Doister*, and is defined in Bailey's *Dictionary* (1721), "a name given by way of taunt to some sorry fellow."

II. ii. 63: *preparation*, used specially for a force ready for combat, as in *Coriolanus*, I. ii. 15.

II. ii. 339: *the humorous man*. Mr. Sidney Lee notes a mention in *Henslowe's Diary*, p. 183, of "The honorable lyfe of the humorous Earle of Gloster with his conquest of Portugalle." [See note to Introduction, p. xv.]

II. ii. 381: *carry it away*. Mr. Craig compares *Romeo and Juliet*, III. i. 77, and notices an example earlier than any in *New English Dictionary*, Nash, *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), Grosart's *Nash*, v. 42.

II. ii. 402, 403. Mr. Craig quotes from *Apollo Shroving* (1627), "It lifts a man up till he grow lesse and lesse like a hawk after a hernshaw."

II. ii. 605: *John-a-dreams*. Mr. Craig notices "John-dreaming" as an epithet in Hall's translation of *Homer*, 1581, b. ii.

III. iv. 135. Compare Jonson, *The Fortunate Isles*, "Enter Skogan and Skelton, in like habits as they lived."

IV. ii. 33: *Hide fox*, defined as "hide and seek, a child's play," by Pegge, *Alphabet of Kenticisms*, 1735.

IV. vii. 139: *unbated*. Compare "unrebated swords" in North's *Plutarch*, "Coriolanus," p. 241, ed. 1603.

v. ii. 6 : *bilboes*. Mr. Craig notes an earlier example than any in *New English Dictionary*: Elyot, *Latin Dictionary* (1538), “*arca*, the pillory, stocks, or bilboes.”

v. ii. 298 : *fat and scant of breath*. Mr. Craig understands *fat* to mean not reduced to athletic condition by a fencer's training

I make the following additions to the first edition :—

I. ii. 129, *solid* : The case in favour of *sallied*, meaning *sullied*, is strengthened by the fact that in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 352, we have in Folio and Quartos *unsallied lily*. [“*Sullied*” has received further support from Dr. W. W. Greg (*Principles of Emendation in Shakespeare*, 1928) and Mr. J. Dover Wilson, not without provoking pleas for “*solid*” on literary grounds. See *Times Literary Supplement*, Oct. 4, 11, 25, etc., 1928. R. H. C.]

I. iv. 8–10. Compare Marlowe's *Faustus*, ed. Bullen, I. p. 300 : “He took his rouse with stoups of Rhenish wine.”

I. v. 68, 69. T. Bright in his book on Melancholy describes the brain (p. 13) as being “as tender as a *posset curd*.”

II. i. 63 : *carp of truth*. So Chapman, *For stay in Competence*, “caught with carps of sophistry.”

II. ii. 103. Compare C. Hollyband, *The Italian Schoolmaister*, 1597, “When the effect is defective.” sig. R. 5.

II. ii. 174. *fishmonger*. Add “Such arrant honest women as are fishe for every man [*i.e.* harlots.]” B. R. *Herodotus*, 1584 (reprint, ed. Lang, p. 131).

II. ii. 201, 202 : Compare from *Greene's Tu Quoque* (Hazlitt, Dodsley, xi. p. 282), “Surely I was begotten in a plum-tree, I ha' such a deal of gum about mine eyes.”

II. ii. 342 : *sere*. Compare “whose tongue grew all too glibbe upon the seare.” N. Breton, *Pasquil's Fooles-Cap* (1600).

II. ii. 381. So Nash, *The Unfortunate Traveller* (ed. Grosart, v. 74), “from all the world hee *carries it awaie*.”

[II. ii. 454 : *chopine*. N. E. D. has : " The English writers *c.* 1600 persistently treated the word as Italian, even spelling it *cioppino*, pl. *cioppini*, and expressly associated it with Venice, so that, although not recorded in Italian dictionaries, it was apparently temporarily fashionable there." R. H. C.]

III. iii. 80. Mr. C. Crawford (to whom I owe the note on II. i. 63) points out to me a parallel in Bacon's *Charge against Frances, Countess of Somerset* (1615) : " But it [the murder] hath three circumstances, which make it grievous beyond other murders ; whereof the first is, that it takes away a man in full peace, in God's and the King's peace ; he thinketh no harm, but is comforting of nature with refection and food, so that, as the Scripture saith, ' his table is made a snare.' "

[III. iv. 53. If Mr. W. J. Lawrence is right (see " *Hamlet as Shakespeare Staged It*," in *Pre-Restoration Studies*, 1927, the pictures hung side by side as in the print referred to in the note, p. 140 *ante*, and were covered with curtains (in a manner once common) which Hamlet drew aside in turn. R. H. C.]

IV. ii. 20 : *like an ape*. Compare Cotgrave under *Sphinge* : " having eaten meat ynough, he reserves his chaps-full to feed on when he feeles himselfe hungrie againe."

V. i. 67. A " Master Youghan " is named in Hakluyt (ed. Madehose, viii. 332, W. J. Craig).

V. i. 151. Compare Cyril Tourneur, *The Transformed Metamorphosis* (1600) :—

" Now earth's baddest good  
Makes ev'ry peasant seem of gentle blood."

The date is not distant from that of *Hamlet*.











